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KENT ON SUNDAY

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IT'S WHAT SUNDAYS ARE ALL ABOUT

No.431 December 26, 2010





THE CHILLING COST OF THE BIG FREEZE

By **MARIJKE COX**

Warning of 'catastrophic' blow to county's economy as snow hits the high street

THE big freeze has left a massive dent in Kent's economy after Christmas shoppers abandoned the high streets leaving some businesses struggling to stay afloat.

It is estimated that millions of pounds could have been lost in trade after shoppers were chased away by heavy snow on the busiest shopping weekend of the year last week.

Gridlocked

A study by global insurer RSA said the cold snap had already cost the South East £559.2 million in lost retail revenue since it started in November, and that this was expected to grow by £669m in the run-up to Christmas.

On Saturday, roads in and around what are usually Kent's busiest shopping towns – including Maidstone and Canterbury – were gridlocked as people dumped their shopping baskets and tried to get home.

Although many braved the shops on Sunday, retail experts believe the impact of the weather will have left businesses badly affected.

Jo James, chief executive of Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, said it could not have come at a worse time when the country is already struggling with a troubled economy.

She said: "The transport situation means staff cannot get to work, deliveries cannot be made, and there is the important element of postal delays – business is just not able to operate properly.

"Retail is probably hardest hit. People simply cannot get out, even those who can are more likely to shop at out-of-town retail centres rather than high street shops, which is where the trade is most needed.

"High street retail relies heavily on Christmas trade.

"And much of it is trade that will not be made up later. Christmas is a one-off hit. It is unlikely that people will simply postpone purchases until after Christmas."

Giant shopping centre Bluewater, near Gravesend, had less shoppers than the same time last year, although Sunday saw an influx of people who had stayed away during the snow on Saturday.

But chairman of the Kent and Medway Federation of Small Businesses, Roger House, said it was small and particularly rural businesses that would be hit hard.

"It's catastrophic – tensions are really rising," he said.

"Shops have got to buy stock – businesses have to be positive to survive – but when they can't sell it the chances are it

CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO



Picture: BBC/TALKBACK

Stella effort wins The Apprentice

CONGRATULATIONS are in order for Kent's very own Apprentice winner Stella English.

More than eight million viewers tuned into the hit BBC One series' final last Sunday to witness the Bexley-born banker's finest moment – being told "you're hired" by Lord Alan Sugar.

English, 31, who was raised by her great-aunt in Thamesmead, will start her new job on January 4.

She said: "Lord Sugar did say I could have the rest of the year off – that's a couple of weeks."



* Includes all surcharges and taxes. See website for details and full terms and conditions.

High street reeling from cold blow

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

will be sold at discount to get it shifted. There are going to be problems with cash flow. These businesses are on a knife-edge already. People are also choosing to buy online instead of through shops."

Mr House said problems with deliveries and staff getting into work also affected businesses.

"Some of the roads into rural villages are just impassable," he said.

"What we have got to do is bring self-help into this. We need the council, but we can also help ourselves and each other to keep business open. Businesses are running behind – they need twice the number of hours in a day."

David Greaves, director at global insurer RSA, said the impact of the continued cold snap, which was also seen at the beginning of 2010, would be felt across the whole South East economy.

"Small businesses in particular could be hardest hit by long-term poor weather conditions," he said. "Despite showing initial resilience earlier this year, many smaller businesses may not be in a position to cope with a sustained loss of income caused by a new fall of snow."

It was not just shoppers and motorists who suffered from the Arctic conditions. Hundreds of rail passengers were also stuck for up to five hours on Southeastern trains in Swanley and Kemsing on Monday night as a fresh bout of snow hit the county.

Eurostar passengers were faced with long queues as they waited to cross the Channel, and people who hoped to get home for Christmas struggled to get flights. The big freeze is expected to continue throughout Christmas and New Year, sparking fears of more big trade losses.

Police budget cuts confirmed at 20%

Frontline services pledge from KPA chair Barnes

By **MARIJKE COX**
marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk

DETAILS of cuts to Kent Police's budget have been released by the Government, confirming early predictions of a 20 per cent reduction in funding.

It means Kent Police Authority, the budget holders for the force, will need to reduce spending by £50 million over the next four years – some £3m less than was forecast earlier this year.

Authority chair Ann Barnes said she was confident the reduced budget could be managed and stressed that frontline policing remained the top priority.

"We've spent the last week number-crunching and I'm pleased to say we have been pretty much spot-on in our calculations," she said.

"The information released by policing minister [Nick Herbert] reaffirms our medium-term financial plan.

"The cuts will be challenging and difficult, but the authority and force have spent many months preparing for this. I'm glad to say it's broadly in line with our forecast."

The cuts are likely to affect 1,000 staff jobs and 500 police officer posts – about a fifth of Kent Police's workforce.

Details outlined by Mr Herbert revealed that Kent will continue to receive a Neighbourhood Policing Fund, which will contribute to the cost of police community support officers until 2013/14.



ANN BARNES: Frontline policing will remain a priority despite challenging cutbacks

The new Police and Crime Commissioner – a directly-elected figure scheduled to take over the role of Kent Police Authority in 2012 – will then have full discretion over how that particular funding is used.

The Government has put aside £50m nationally to fund the first elections of the new commissioners, who will have the power to hold police forces to account.

A counter-terrorism grant will remain for Kent Police but the exact amount will not be known until the New Year.

Discussions will take place between Kent Police Authority members and the force's Chief Constable, Ian Learmonth, on the funding settlement and further work will be carried out on the medium term financial plan.

Mrs Barnes said: "At least we now have some clarity from the Government on our special grants and the exact impact on Kent.

"The first two years will be difficult as the majority of the cuts will have to take place during this period.

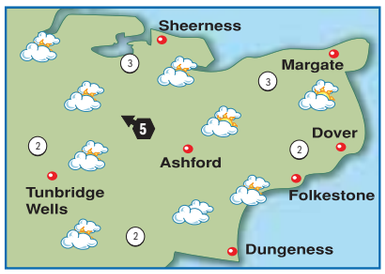
"While a smaller proportion of the cuts fall in years three and four, there is much uncertainty around grant allocation, and the full impact of changes to the police funding formula.

"However, I'm confident we are ready and, together with the force, we will deliver.

"I want to reassure the public that a quality policing service will continue and frontline policing remains our top priority."

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Kent today



TODAY: After a frosty start, the morning is expected to be fine with sunny intervals. A dry afternoon too, but with cloud increasing. Gentle winds. Cold. Max temp 1-4C (34-39F). **TONIGHT:** Dry with clear spells developing after a largely cloudy start. Moderate winds. Min temp -1 to 2C (30-36F).

Around Britain

		°C	°F			°C	°F
Aberdeen	cloudy	2	36	London	cloudy	3	37
Belfast	sleet	4	39	Liverpool	cloudy	3	37
Birmingham	cloudy	2	36	Manchester	snow	2	36
B'mouth	cloudy	5	41	Newcastle	snow	1	34
Bristol	cloudy	5	41	Norwich	cloudy	1	34
Cardiff	snow	4	39	Oxford	cloudy	2	36
Cork	rain	7	45	Southsea	cloudy	5	41
Edinburgh	snow	2	36	S'hampton	cloudy	4	39
Glasgow	sleet	4	39	Southport	cloudy	3	37
Isle of Man	rain	5	41	Swansea	sleet	5	41
Leeds	cloudy	0	32	Torquay	sleet	5	41

Sun & moon

Sunrise	8.01am	Sunset	3.50pm	Lighting up times:
Moonrise	10.48pm	Moonset	10.34am	3.50pm to 8.02am

High Tides

	today				tomorrow			
	ht (m)		ht (m)		ht (m)		ht (m)	
Dover	02.08	6.6	14.30	6.3	02.57	6.5	15.23	6.2
Margate	02.54	4.7	15.32	4.6	03.43	4.6	16.27	4.5
St Mary's	07.58	5.5	20.25	5.2	08.48	5.3	21.18	5.0

Week ahead

monday Dry and sunny. max 4C min1C

tuesday Milder with rain. max 6C min 1C

wednesday Rain at times. max 6C min -1C

thursday Sunny intervals. max 6C min 0C

friday Dull and wet. max 7C min 1C

saturday Largely cloudy. max 4C min 1C

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Caught between a rock bus and a hard place

Man crushed by Kasabian's tour coach on road to recovery

By **JULIA ROGERS**
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LUCKY ESCAPE: David Ellsom was crushed when trying to stop indie rockers' Kasabian's tour bus from hitting a wall

IT WAS a split-second, instinctive reaction. David Ellsom ran behind the back of Kasabian's band bus waving his arms furiously to stop it from ploughing into the brick wall.

Instead, the 14-metre double-decker tour bus pinned him up against it, crushing his pelvis, breaking his ankle and knocking him unconscious.

When his mate Nigel jumped from the bus to see what had happened he was met with the horrific image of David, eyes open, wedged against the wall.

Leaping back into the bus and pulling away, David was freed and slumped to the floor. It was the smack of hitting the ground which brought him back round.

"It felt like it happened in slow motion," said the 42-year-old from Whitstable. "I could see what was about to happen but I just couldn't get out of the way in time.

"I remember taking that last breath before it hit and thinking 'this could be my last'. I know I am very lucky to be alive."

It was 6.10am on November 25 last year and the two drivers were in Bournemouth preparing for the first hotel run of the day, ferrying the crew for indie rock band Kasabian between gigs.

Paramedics

The first pain David remembers was his ankle and then his lower back. He patted his hands down his body to check the damage.

He said: "I said to myself, 'I can move my neck and wiggle my toes so I can't be that bad'. I had blood on my hands. It was coming from my eyes. After that, it's a bit of a blur."

Paramedics arrived within minutes and David was whisked, blue lights blaring, to Poole Hospital.

He said: "I was screaming for drugs. I said 'whatever you do don't call my mum and dad, they'll go mad'. I still had my mobile phone, so I called my sister Claire."

When Claire, mum Hazel and dad Norman arrived at the hospital a couple of hours later, David had been whisked into surgery. Pins wre inserted in his badly broken left ankle and his right leg was put in traction.

Scans revealed David had also broken his pelvis in two places and his hip bone.

He was taken to the high dependency unit. "At this point I think the doctors thought I must have internal injuries – miraculously it turned out that I didn't."

Unable to move, with a 'space boot' protecting his ankle, and a catheter in place, David was bedridden. A week later he was transferred to Southampton hospital.

During a five-hour operation on December 5 last year, surgeons fitted metal plates to repair his hip and pelvis.

He said: "I never thought I wouldn't walk again, it was a question of when. Some days the pain was so bad. Being bed-bound was frustrating, upsetting and depressing."

On December 14, David was transferred to the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford where he began gruelling sessions of physiotherapy.

Halfway through January, David was allowed home, although still confined to a wheelchair. His living room became his bedroom and his parents became his carers, 24 hours a day.

Professional care was provided by NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent's intermediate care team, and physiotherapist Tilly Chandran was given the task of getting David back on his feet.

Eventually he was able to stand using a Zimmer frame and soon after he was strong enough to start walking with the aid of two walking sticks, and then one.

He said: "The doctors predicted nine months but on May 28 – six months after my accident – I returned back to work and my rock 'n' roll lifestyle.

"I am self-employed and have been driving band buses for about four years. Funnily enough, my first job back at work was with Kasabian. They had a million questions about what had happened."

David says he is close to making a full recovery, but still has some stiffness in his leg and ankle, but he is looking forward to a Christmas "with all the trimmings".

He said: "It will be a better Christmas this year at home with all the family. It's been a an incredible year. It's taken a long time to be able to walk round the back of a bus again."

David's story also appears in the latest edition of YourHealth magazine, which can be read online at www.yourhealtheck.nhs.uk.

Bulgarian heroin smuggler jailed

A BULGARIAN heroin smuggler has been sentenced to seven years behind bars.

Nedko Nedev, 37, was caught trying to illegally import the class-A drug into the UK through the passenger terminals at Dover's Eastern Docks.

Canterbury Crown Court heard on Wednesday, December 15, how border control officers discovered the drugs after searching the Mitsubishi Pajero he was driving.

The offence took place on Sunday, March 27 this year.

Dog in frenzied attack on sheep

POLICE are appealing for a dog owner to come forward after a sheep was badly injured in Mote Park, Maidstone.

The animal will now have to have its leg amputated or be put down due to the attack at 11am on Thursday, December 16.

Officers say the female owner of the dog was wearing a long brown coat at the time.

Anyone with information should call police on 01622 690690, quoting reference 1216-0393.

Fewer hurdles as stiles are removed

KENT County Council has removed more than 2,000 stiles on public paths throughout the county.

Public rights of way officers have either moved the obstructions completely or installed a kissing gate to make it easier for walkers to pass through.

Cabinet member for the environment, Cllr Nick Chard, said: "This major campaign by Kent's countryside access service has exceeded expectations.

"This significantly improves the access for walkers wanting to explore the beautiful Kent countryside."

Warning to avoid gift wrap mishaps during Christmas

TRADING standards officers are urging parents to be careful their children do not unwrap dangerous Christmas presents this weekend.

The warning follows the seizure in Kent of a rocking horse that was so badly made it would not have supported the weight of a child.

Officers also found a scooter which could have easily trapped small fingers and caused serious injury, although both toys seemed to be suitable gifts on first appearance.

Kent Trading Standards is reminding people to double-check the packaging and labelling on gifts, looking out for sharp edges and detachable small parts and making sure items are not broken or damaged.

Toys should also carry the 'CE' mark, which is a European standard of safety and a legal requirement.

Area manager Mark Rolfe said: "We are all trying to spend wisely this Christmas and a bargain can seem very tempting.

"Please remember to take the time to check items before you buy or before your child plays with them, and report anything suspicious to us by calling Consumer Direct on 08454 040506.

"Let's make sure everyone has a happy and safe Christmas."

Meanwhile, Trading Standards is also warning people to be careful when purchasing BB guns that have so-called laser sights.

These contain a real laser which is extremely dangerous as it can cause permanent eye damage leading to blindness.

Mr Rolfe said: "People using these guns may already take the precaution of wearing eye protectors but these will not stop the powerful lasers from blinding the user or anyone unfortunate enough to be looking towards the sight.

"Our officers recently seized a BB gun with a Class-III laser. This should not be being sold and there is a real risk to the public."



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Money worries on the increase say Samaritans

A LEADING charity is urging people struggling with debt to seek help after new findings showed money worries are on the rise.

A study by the Samaritans revealed that more than half of residents living in the region fear they will not have enough money next year, with a third worried about losing their jobs and a fifth their homes.

Mary Greenwood, director of the Samaritans in Canterbury, said residents continue to worry about health and relationships, but concerns are becoming increasingly focused on having enough money to be comfortable.

"It's also clear that many of us are anxious about keeping our jobs and homes," she said. "The most important thing to remember in these tough times is that we can all help each other and no one should suffer alone."

Struggling

She appealed for anyone living in Kent to call the Samaritans if they are struggling to cope. She also urged people facing Christmas alone or even those surrounded by family but unable to cope to get in touch.

"Sadly, people's problems don't just disappear because it's Christmas," she said.

One volunteer working in Canterbury received a call from an elderly woman on Christmas Day last year.

"If she didn't call us she wouldn't speak to anyone over the festive season. Simple human contact is so important," said the volunteer.

Another Kent helper said: "I've done Christmas duties as a Samaritan for the last five years. It's so rewarding as we really do make a difference. Callers are often surprised when they get an answer.

"Last year I answered the door to a man who looked totally downtrodden. We talked for over two hours about how this time of year makes his past so painful. I couldn't solve his problems, but I think that having human contact really made his Christmas."

Call Samaritans on 08457 90 90 90 or email jo@samaritans.org.uk 24 hours a day.

CANTERBURY West railway station reopened on Monday after a £4m refurbishment programme.

The works were carried out by Southeastern, Network Rail and Canterbury City Council using a £2.7m Government grant. Transport minister Norman Baker said: "We want public transport that is accessible to everyone and these changes will benefit passengers using this busy station."

Boys rescued as lake ice cracks

FIREFIGHTERS rescued two children stranded on an island in the middle of a frozen lake.

The nine-year-old boys walked across the ice in Herne Bay Memorial Park only to see it crack behind them, at about noon on Sunday. Watch manager Dick Judge said: "The ice was thick enough to take their weight as they made their way to the island, but soon began breaking up.

"Although the lake isn't very deep, had the boys fallen through the ice the consequences could have been tragic."

Movie reels theft

CINEMA reels of the new Little Fockers film were stolen from the boot of a courier's car. The theft happened between 6pm on Saturday, December 18, and 10.30am the following day.

The four reels can only be viewed on cinema projectors and were stored in cardboard boxes in silver circular tins.

Anyone with information is asked to call Kent Police on 01622 604210.

Party says alarm at Coalition cuts offers electoral foothold

Red shoots of recovery with Labour's KCC win

LABOUR has predicted a party comeback in the wake of sweeping Coalition Government cuts after an election victory at County Hall, ***writes Marijke Cox***.

Gordon Cowan beat political rivals to secure the Dover Town seat at Kent County Council, which became vacant last month following the death of Tory Roger Frayne after a long illness.

Labour group leader Cllr Leslie Christie said the victory marked the start of the return of the party after all but two of the 20 seats it held were lost in the 2009 county council elections.

"I welcome this victory with great pleasure," he said. "It marks the beginning of the return of the Labour Party to holding its traditional seats of power in Kent.

"The result is a clear reaction to the slash and burn policies of the Coalition and I look forward to welcoming Cllr Cowan as a member of the county Labour group."

KCC now comprises 73 Tories, seven Lib Dems, one Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents' Association and three Labour members.

Not a single district or borough council – including Medway's unitary authority – in Kent is Labour-run.

At the General Election in May, Labour lost its seven remaining Kent seats in Parliament turning the county's political landscape entirely blue.

Cllr Cowan agreed that the party was making its comeback. "We were thumped in the last elections and ended up with just two seats, which was due to a national issue with allowances," he said.



COMEBACK: Ed Miliband saw Labour boosted by Cllr Gordon Cowan (inset)

"But the measures the Coalition is taking, with drastic reductions in local authority funds and the rise in tuition fees, is upsetting people, which is seen through the voice of communities and demonstrations.

"This is the start of our return. People don't like what they see happening at the moment in Government.

"It is extremely hard to have a mass of Tory control, but what we are seeing already at KCC is people wanting [Conservative group leader] Paul Carter to take on the Coalition, for example with the issue of Building Schools for the Future – this was a good way forward for schools. We will fight tooth and nail to make sure there is as much forward thinking as possible."

Cllr Cowan vowed to fight against the "disastrous" grant cuts, but admitted it was hard with just three Labour members on the council. In the contest for the Dover Town seat were Patrick Sherratt (Con), who secured 1,348 votes; Victor Matcham (Ukip) 404; and John Trickey (Lib Dem) 170. Cllr Cowan won with 1,491 votes.

In October, Labour candidate John Jones stormed to victory in the River ward by-election for Medway Council.

He replaced Tory councillor David Craggs who resigned two weeks after being elected when it was found there was a conflict of interest between his positions as a special constable and councillor.

Cllr Jones' appointment was seen by local party members as a message from Medway voters of their fears of the impact the Coalition's spending cuts would have.

During a visit to Kent last month, Labour leader Ed Miliband said the party had an opportunity to rebuild what was lost.

He told Archant KOS Media: "It's about a long engagement with people from Kent and elsewhere about what they want from a renewed Labour Party.

"I want us to win as many seats in Kent as possible at the next election and I'm confident we will start to regain a foothold with the local council elections next May."





THE INTERVIEW



BY TOM BETTS

When only a boo will do for seasoned performers

SOME might find it a bit demoralising being booed and hissed every night, but Bobbi Kent and Marcel Deville say it only fuels their love of performing.

As the Ugly Sisters in this year's Tunbridge Wells pantomime, Cinderella, they are used to being the target of an audience's bile, but say they wouldn't have it any other way.

In fact it is the loudness of the boos that drives them forward, said Bobbi, who spoke to us just as he had stepped off stage after a performance.

"I love it when we get booed. If the audience take a real dislike to you then you know you're doing a really good job. I love pantomime, and the fact that it gives so many children their first taste of theatre, it's wonderful, but I guess I'm just sentimental like that."

Wicked

Marcel added: "I agree. If the audience really give you an awful reception then it makes me really happy, so I hope everyone who comes to see the show will give us a truly terrible time!

"As performers I think Bobbi and I have the best roles to play, it's so much fun being dastardly, wicked and evil. If we don't get booed we get very upset."

It is not just that the pair concur on.

They both say that the key ingredient in staging a top-notch pantomime is teamwork and a united effort.

Bobbi said: "For it to work well everyone has to be firing on all cylinders. The magic ingredient is the combination of talents of the whole cast and those who work backstage. If there isn't good teamwork then it won't work at all. It's more important than the jokes and staging and everyone has to pull together in the right direction."



STAGE FRIGHT: Bobbi Kent and Marcel Deville are the Ugly Sisters in Cinderella

Marcel said: "We are working very well together this year. It means that the show is as good as it can be and the audiences have really seemed to enjoy themselves. It's a really slick show, and the gags are great."

The duo themselves are used to working as a team.

In the summer months they put in a 25-week stint entertaining tourists in Turkey, in a show run by Bobbi, but return to star in pantomimes during the close season.

For Bobbi, now 72, it has been a long association.

He said: "I've been starring in pantomimes since I was 17 years old. Back then I appeared in The Stage as the youngest ugly sister in the business, but now I reckon I might just be the oldest. Funny really but I'm proud of that.

Buzz

"I still love the business and it still gives me a real buzz to entertain people, even though I've been doing it a long, long time now. I've never really lost that."

Marcel shares his friend's enthusiasm for the world of panto.

He said: "I am absolutely loving it this year. Every single day is like a new adventure and so magical. It's a beautiful theatre too."

Despite both actors insisting they love to be hated, at the end of the show they find some redemption.

Marcel, 40, said: "It all turns out for the best, but it's not long before they start bickering again!

"It is a real family show though. There are lots of visual things for the children to enjoy but lots of jokes for the adults too, so they won't get bored."

Cinderella is at the Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells, until January 2.

For tickets visit the website at www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk or call the box office on 01892 530613.

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Rethink urged over cuts to mental health service

MENTAL health campaigners have delivered a petition to County Hall against deep cuts to services, ***writes Marijke Cox.***

It was handed to Kent County Council chairman Bill Hayton by staff and users of the East Kent Floating Support Service, which has helped hundreds of people suffering mental health problems since it opened eight years ago.

Service leader Pauline Featherstone said it targeted the most vulnerable in society, helping to reduce the threat of eviction and homelessness. But the support service, which costs £250,000 a year to run and is free for users, will close in the spring when funding is removed.

Ms Featherstone said: "We're due to close at the end of March but hope this campaign will keep it going."

The service is run by mental health charity Rethink and funded by Supporting People, a Government programme.

Ms Featherstone said: "People who have completed the programme are able to work with new service users as volunteers, with projects such as the peer befriending service, and this helps them with the transition between having support and adjusting back into society.

"This service is a lifeline for so many people that are socially excluded and if it closes they will be pushed back into isolation.

"They will be less likely to make a recovery in their mental health and more likely to end up in hospital. It will mean more cost to the NHS in the long run."

Ms Featherstone said the service reduces the threat of eviction and homelessness, avoids hospital admissions and prevents mental health crises.

Former service-users have also called for a rethink. Pete, who is now a volunteer, said: "This service is instrumental in promoting wellness and recovery in vulnerable people with mental health problems.

"Without it people will end up in hospital, homeless, committing crimes and in emotional, financial and general distress."

But County Hall chiefs say the service will be managed more efficiently.

Cabinet member for community services Cllr Mike Hill said: "The Kent Supporting People Programme spends over £10 million on floating support services.

Consistent

"These involve about 70 different services to help with benefits, setting up utilities, becoming independent, careers advice, getting into volunteering and dealing with debt.

"These services are provided in Dover by Rethink and three other providers.

"We want to be able to manage the services more effectively and are moving to have more consistent provision across the county, rather than being run separately in each district."

Cllr Hill said savings of about £4m needed to be made. "We have been working closely with the providers affected, including Rethink, to prepare for the end of their contracts in March," he added.

"Services with other providers will remain and will continue to support vulnerable people next year. We will be re-tendering for new providers in April, 2012, who will work with us across Kent to best help those who need short-term housing support to ultimately live independently in the community."



"My husband and I separated last year. I was at a complete loss to know what to do. Whitehead Monckton were very caring and were able to help me arrange everything without us going to court. They also sorted out the mortgage and made sure I had a new will."

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Teen attacked near fish and chip shop

POLICE are appealing for witnesses after a teenager was assaulted in a fish-and-chip shop on the Isle of Sheppey.

The 15-year-old suffered a bruised neck and cut above his left eye when a scuffle broke out at the Queenborough premises, just after 5pm on November 2. His assailant was a tall, unshaven black man with scruffy, short black hair.

Anyone with information should call police on 01795 419182, quoting reference CY/17439/10.

Lawyers resolve to help broken families

A GROUP of lawyers in Kent have donated £500 to help local children affected by family breakdown.

The county division of Resolution has given the cash to the National Association of Child Contact Centres, which provides support to youngsters whose parents have separated.

Kent chairwoman Dawn Harrison said: "As many separated parents and their children know only too well, managing Christmas across two households can be challenging."

Enjoy the Christmas spirit in moderation

MORE than 4,200 people in eastern and coastal Kent have been admitted to hospital this year with alcohol-related injuries.

Health chiefs are therefore advising parents to cut back on drinking this Christmas to ensure their children do not follow in their footsteps.

For more information call the East Kent Alcohol Service on 01227 453635.

Relief as plans to close 999 centre are shelved

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

CONTROVERSIAL plans to route all of Kent's 999 fire calls to Hampshire have been dropped by the Coalition.

The county's existing call centre near Maidstone was set to close under the previous Government's proposals to streamline England's existing 46 local control rooms into nine regional centres.

More than £200 million has already been spent on the scheme nationwide.

Sharon Riley has spent the last seven years fighting the proposals on behalf of the Fire Brigades Union, and told KoS the decision to axe the scheme was good news for the people of Kent.

Knowledge

She said: "Not a huge number of people work at the Kent call centre – perhaps about 30 or 40 – but it's the years of training, the professionalism, the local knowledge and the experience they possess that would have been lost under these plans.

"The regional control centre in Hampshire was meant to have a computer system that could accept databases from nine separate fire brigades, but how could it handle the complexities of local road names or areas known under different names to local people?



Picture: KENT FIRE AND RESCUE

RESPONSE: Kent Fire crews would have been called from Hampshire control centre

"It's good news that the plan has been scrapped but in the current economic climate we are still concerned budget-wise about where we go next."

Regional control centres were supposed to improve the country's ability to respond to terrorism, large-scale industrial accidents and natural disasters such as flooding.

Hampshire would have dealt with calls for the entire South East.

But since the plans were first unveiled five years ago they have been dogged by huge delays, and costs have spiralled.

Cllr Bryan Cope – chairman of the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority – said: "If the Government had achieved what it originally set out to achieve then I think the idea would have been a good thing.

"But it looks as though they've not been able to produce the software to drive it through. It should have been installed in 2007 yet we're practically in 2011, which represents a somewhat difficult position."

The Government announced this week it will stop funding the project as quickly as possible and start to consult fire and rescue services about developing alternative plans to save money.

Cllr Cope added: "We've got to get on now and work out our own answers. We may turn to collaboration [with another county] if at all possible because that would make economic sense."

The scrapping of the proposals has also been welcomed by South Thanet MP Laura Sandys (Con).

She said: "Having campaigned for many years against the Labour government's amalgamation of our fire control, I am very pleased this hugely expensive centralising scheme has been terminated.

"Hampshire could not be any further away from Thanet, making it almost impossible for any local knowledge to be retained in this extravagant and unnecessary plan."

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Help feathered friends survive the big freeze

THE current cold snap may bring rare breeds of bird to Kent, but the RSPB is asking residents to help more common varieties survive the winter.

Experts say an even earlier winter chill than usual means wild birds will face a test in finding enough food to give them vital energy supplies.

Sophie McCallum, RSPB South East media officer, said: "With the harsh winter weather we are experiencing the wild birds in our gardens will need a little extra help.

"The insects, berries and seeds they would usually feast on become off limits if there is frost and snow.

"The food and water you put out for them provides the nutrients essential to their survival.



FEED: Birds need our help during the winter

"There is an upside for people too. The chilly conditions may mean that a flurry of rare birds you don't often see until later in winter will appear earlier as they use our gardens as a safe haven. During cold snaps birds become more vulnerable and are more likely to come into your garden to seek refuge.

"To help their survival you can provide food like meal worms, fat-balls, crushed peanuts, dried fruit, seeds and grain.

"Also leftovers like grated cheese, porridge oats, soft fruit, unsalted bacon, cooked rice, pasta and the insides of cooked potatoes are a good source of energy for garden birds.

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'I was afraid for our safety' says tourist suing holiday firm

By **MARIJKE COX**

A HOLIDAYMAKER who fell ill at a "filthy" hotel has launched a legal battle against a travel firm claiming it knew of hygiene problems at the resort.

Laura Marsh, from Welling in Bexley, sought help from specialist travel lawyers Irwin Mitchell after becoming sick while on holiday in August at the Savita Resort and Spa in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt.

According to the law firm, the 31-year-old is one of 15 tourists taking action against First Choice after it was found that similar problems had occurred at the four-star hotel.

Lawyers representing the group expressed "serious concerns" about the welfare of visitors after confirming it was the second year they had received instructions from people who stayed at the resort.

Ms Marsh, who suffered gastric symptoms causing her to be violently sick, said: "My partner and I had saved really hard for this holiday, but when we arrived we were shocked to see that there was such an apparent disregard for health and hygiene throughout the hotel.

"It is not surprising that I fell ill. I certainly wasn't the only one and I am just grateful it wasn't worse. The entire time we were there I was genuinely afraid for our safety."

Pharmacy technician Ms Marsh said when she returned to the UK she discovered First Choice had been aware of issues last year.

"How can they continue to send people there knowing the risks? It's an absolute disgrace," she said. "We have seen the comments on Trip Advisor about people falling ill.

"What more proof do tour operators need before they recognise there is a serious problem here and that lessons must be learnt?"

Lloyd Williams, from Irwin Mitchell's specialist travel law team, confirmed it was the second year the firm had acted for holidaymakers who had suffered serious gastric illnesses at the Savita Resort.

"Quite rightly our clients want answers and reassurance that something will be done to prevent further suffering as a result of substandard health and hygiene," he said.

But a spokesman from First Choice said neither Ms Marsh nor the law firm had contacted the company about the claim.

He said: "Only two cases of minor illness were reported at the Savita Resort and Spa during the month of August, neither of which were made by Ms Marsh.

"In fact, neither our holiday representatives nor the hotel staff have any record of speaking to her while she was in residence."

The spokesman urged the law firm to work with them directly to resolve the allegations.

He added: "The Savita Resort and Spa enjoys a good sickness record, and is regularly audited by independent health and safety experts, as well as our own hygiene specialists."

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County Hall battles back after poor Ofsted report

CHILD protection chiefs say Kent County Council is already making improvements in response to the authority's recent 'inadequate' Ofsted inspection, ***writes Steve Knight.***

Areas of particular concern raised after a two-week inspection in October included the management and supervision of services, low educational attainment of looked-after children, high number of cases not receiving quality assessments and social workers with high case loads.

The 'inadequate' rating was the main reason KCC was marked as 'poor' for its overall children's social services department in Ofsted's annual inspection.

But speaking at a full council meeting last week, leader Paul Carter assured his fellow members that things were already heading in the right direction.



ASSURANCE: Paul Carter said things are heading in the right direction post Ofsted

Response

He said: "When I received the Ofsted report on safeguarding and looked after children services, my immediate response was one of shock, anger and determination to put it right as fast as possible. However, there are some things we can do quickly and radically – others take longer to do.

"One thing is for sure – we are totally dependent on our front-line staff delivering good quality services to families and support for looked-after children.

"We need to improve our efforts to ensure we have the best quality staff. In our submission to the Department for Education we have listed eight or nine key activities alongside more detailed action to unpick what went wrong and find better solutions to put it right."

Cllr Carter was one of several to meet with the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families, Tim Loughton, this month, who was said to have been impressed by the progress made so far.

He added: "We have three new senior managers starting. I have met two of them – Malcolm Newsam from Bedfordshire, who was the leading driver in Essex, and Pam Rowe, who has taken Surrey from inadequate to adequate.

"They have come on the market in our hour of need when we need to add to the quality and capacity in our management structures, challenging new faces and existing faces, so that the recovery plan transforms the services as quickly as possible.

"We have to put in place the right services to make that recovery plan happen and they will be visiting teams over the next few weeks to talk to them about what went wrong."



The NHS urgently needs your blood

By MARIJKE COX
marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk

HEALTH chiefs have made an urgent appeal for people to give blood after severe weather forced donors away.

Stocks of one blood group – O negative – have fallen below the preferred levels and NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) are calling on people to help replenish stocks.

A regular supply of blood is vital because red cells last for only 35 days.

But with the freezing weather expected to continue throughout Christmas and New Year, health bosses fear sessions might be pushed back to later dates.

John Canning, Kent's lead donor relations manager for NHSBT, said road conditions in the region have caused disruption leading to fewer people giving blood.

"Stocks of one particular blood group, O negative, have fallen below preferred levels and NHSBT is appealing in particular for these donors to come forward," he said.

"Group O negative is particularly important as this blood can be given safely to patients with other blood groups.

"O negative donors who haven't donated in the last 16 weeks are being asked to donate now to help make sure we can supply hospitals throughout the festive season."

In one week 69 sessions were cancelled across England and north Wales during the worst of the weather. Sessions that did take place saw fewer donors than expected. In badly affected areas 4x4 vehicles were used to move blood supplies to hospitals to ensure patients received the required treatment.



VITAL: O negative is particularly in demand

Jon Latham, assistant director of blood donation at NHSBT, said to boost stocks people need to make the most of donation sessions that are going ahead to make up for cancellations in other areas.

He said: "Maintaining healthy stocks of all blood groups is essential as people will still be requiring treatment."

Platelet donors due to donate are also being asked to step forward as platelets only have a shelf life of five days.

There are four main blood groups; O, A, B and AB. Group O is most common and therefore most in demand.

First-time donors should be aged 17-65, weighing at least 50 kg (7 stone 12lbs) and in general good health. To book an appointment call 0300 123 23 23 or visit www.blood.co.uk.

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Sat nav put driver onto wrong track

TRAINS were delayed by more than an hour in Medway after a woman driver followed her sat-nav instructions onto the railway.

Her car was going over the level crossing when the driver – believed to be in her 20s – took a left turn and straddled the London and coast-bound tracks.

A train was just minutes away but Network Rail shut down all power to prevent an accident.

The Renault Megane was removed from the tracks an hour after the incident, which took place on Thursday.

MP Fallon slams shadow PM's skills

SEVENOAKS MP Michael Fallon has accused Labour leader Ed Miliband of failing to control his own shadow cabinet.

The deputy chairman of the Conservatives was referring to a television interview in which shadow home secretary Ed Balls appeared to criticise Mr Miliband's performance during Prime Minister's Questions.

Mr Fallon said: "Ed Miliband is still struggling to exercise authority over his own shadow cabinet.

"Labour are ending the year just as they began it under Gordon Brown – divided under a weak leader who isn't even supported by his close colleagues."

THE deadline to apply for one of about 800 temporary jobs as Census collectors has been extended to January 17.

The vacancies offer the option of 15 or 25 part-time hours a week, or 37 full-time hours.

Census area manager Nicky Field said: "This is a real chance to earn some money, and gain valuable skills and work experience."

Full details at www.censusjobs.co.uk and at local job and community centres.

Malaysia medal is an honour for councillor

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

A DISTINGUISHED county councillor has been recognised for his services in military operations more than 40 years ago.

Cllr Mike Angell – the member for Ashford Rural South – was awarded the Malaysia Medal having served in the Borneo jungle between 1962 and 1964 when he led a communications team in the 99th Brigade Gurkhas.

He served again between 1965 and 1967 at a naval headquarters in Singapore.

Along with other veterans Cllr Angell was presented with the medal by the Malaysian Military Attaché at a ceremony last month.

An excerpt from the award citation reads: "In appreciation of the meritorious acts made by the security forces from Britain, the Federation of Malaysia wishes to award medals to all those who distinguished themselves in chivalry, gallantry and loyalty while performing their services during the confrontation period from 1962 to 1966."

Cllr Angell fought in what became known as the Indonesia-Malaysia confrontation, which was an undeclared war over the future of the island of Borneo.

The origins of the conflict lay in Indonesian attempts to destabilise the UK-backed Federation of Malaysia, which came into being in 1963.



MILITARY SERVICE: Cllr Mike Angell

Cllr Angell, who is also chairman of the Ashford Local Board, was congratulated for the honour at a full council meeting held last week.

He said: "It is very nice for a government to say thank-you in this way to British servicemen and women, and I very much appreciate it.

"I'm sure my grandchildren will be very proud."

Meanwhile, five former county councillors have been awarded the title of Honorary Alderman in recognition of their service to the people of Kent.

Former Kent Police Authority chairman Dr Stuart Cox, 16-year council member John Frisby, Shepherd Neame president Bobby Neame, and deputy Lieutenants for Kent William Newman and John Spence, were all honoured with the accolade last week.

KCC chairman Cllr Bill Hayton presented each with a certificate to commemorate their award, and their names will be added to the wooden honours board in the council chamber.

He said: "Kent County Council has bestowed the title of Honorary Alderman on these former members to recognise their exceptional dedication and service to both the council and to the people of Kent.

"I was very proud to honour these individuals today."

The title of Honorary Alderman is a statutory Office of Dignity awarded under the Local Government Act 1972.

This is only the second time KCC has given out the awards following last year's inaugural ceremony.



Josie Russell buys childhood home

HAMMER attack survivor Josie Russell has bought the home she grew up in.

The 23-year-old artist used money from a trust fund – set up after the 1996 murder of her mother Lin and younger sister Megan in Chillenden, near Canterbury – to purchase the cottage in North Wales.

Miss Russell, then aged nine, was tied up and beaten along with her 45-year-old mother and six-year-old sister, suffering severe head injuries.

The family dog was also killed in the assault by deranged killer Michael Stone.

In an interview with The Sun, she said she had "so many happy, happy memories" of living in the house that is now hers, thanks to the fund and compensation from the Criminal Injuries Board.

She said: "It just feels right. I'm going home and I'll never leave."

Her father Shaun, an environmental scientist, lives in a neighbouring cottage.

Miss Russell said she plans to keep the wallpaper chosen by her mother in her childhood bedroom, and added: "I love the fact that Lin was such a strong character. I feel close to her in this house and I want to recreate the decoration exactly as she did it.

Stone

"What makes it even more special is that Shaun lives next door."

The family settled in the cottage in 1991 when Miss Russell was three. They moved to Kent in 1995.

Miss Russell, who is sharing her home with boyfriend Iwan Griffith, told the newspaper: "We aren't in a hurry to get married or have children yet, but one day it will be an amazing feeling to bring them up in this house in the same way that Lin and Shaun brought Megan and me up."

The design and textiles graduate, who also works at a branch of Tesco, said of Stone: "I just want to close him off in a chapter of my life that's over.

"I did go to Megan's grave on what would have been her 21st birthday this year – August 15. I sometimes feel shocked that I am the one that lived and, of course, sad, but also very lucky to be alive and to have Shaun as my dad.

"Now I understand how much he had to deal with, losing his daughter and his wife but also caring for me. He is the best dad in the world and I am so proud of him.

"For me life is very much about living in the here and now, but there are always things about my past that will make me feel happy and proud. This house reminds me of so many of them," she said.

KENT Police are appealing for witnesses following a fatal road accident in Canterbury.

A woman in her 60s was killed at about 4.35pm on Friday, December 17, after being hit by a silver Vauxhall Corsa in The Terrace.

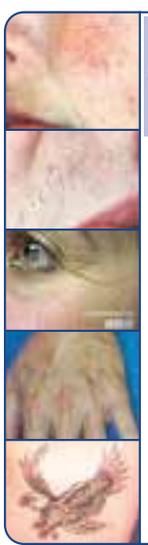
It is believed she may have stepped out from behind a parked vehicle.

Anyone with information should call 01622 798538.

A CONFIDENTIAL helpline for people with mental health problems will remain open over the Christmas and New Year holidays.

People who are feeling down and would benefit from the emotional support Mental Health Matters offers should call 0800 107 0160.

Helpful advice and contacts are also available at www.signpostuk.org.



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Electronic gadgets make good monkey business

WHEN I was a child, all I wanted for Christmas was Thunderbirds' Tracy Island, ***writes Joe Bill***.

And not the one Blue Peter presenters struggled to make out of toilet rolls and foil, either. I wanted the one from the shop, in the box.

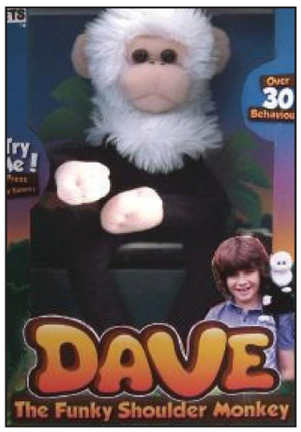
That was 1993. A year earlier it had been WWF wrestling figures, and before that Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles making up the annual Christmas fad.

Everyone knows the horror stories from the late 1990s, when parents went to extraordinary lengths to acquire a plastic space ranger by the name of Buzz Lightyear.

As Toy Story reached cinema screens in November, 1995, youngsters demanded and parents duly obeyed. Tales of pavement sleepovers and bidding wars outside Hamleys were rife.

And 15 years earlier it was no different, as the Christmas clock was ticking to the sound of the Rubik's Cube being thrown against the wall of many a British home.

I could go on about the hallucinogenic aerial-heads known as the Teletubbies in 1997, or the talkative and somewhat belligerent Furbies in 1999. Every year there is a handful of toys that not even Father Christmas can get hold of. So in the hope I might get a glance at this year's must-have playthings, I went to one of Kent's top shopping centres – Fremlin Walk in Maidstone.



CHEEKY: Shoulder monkey Dave

There, managers at the House of Fraser say remote-control helicopters have been flying off the shelves.

"Our Christmas area is very near the menswear department," a spokesman said. "Remote-control helicopters have really taken off and we suspect a few male customers have been tempted while shopping for other items."

At the Menkind shop on Fremlin Walk, two other innovative electronic inventions have captured the imagination of customers.

Store manager Julie Cook singled out the two favourites for 2010 as Dave the Funky Shoulder Monkey and the Kymera Wand. The wand (£49.99) tunes in to infrared signals given out by household remote controls, giving it the ability to change television channels and even raise the volume on your CD player.

Ms Cook said: "These toys use technology to entertain and that's what customers are looking for.

"The Kymera Wand has been the big news toy this Christmas. It launched on the Dragons' Den BBC TV show – and of course there's the Harry Potter element which adds to its popularity."

In close contention, and aimed more at the children, is Dave the Funky Shoulder Monkey (£24.99). The cuddly character sits on his owner's shoulder and comments on the world as it passes by. But be warned, he does have a cheeky side.

Ms Cook said: "Customers love Dave because he is brilliant and very funny. Our Christmas trade was absolutely crazy. We've been busy throughout, but the last few days were manic."

And even if you couldn't face battling your way through all the frantic shoppers before Christmas, you can always try your luck during the January sales …

A LOTTERY player from Bromley sitting on a ticket worth £2.3 million is among nine mystery millionaires missing out on a total of £17m in unclaimed cash, including three Lotto jackpot winners and six EuroMillions victors. The player has until May to claim their winnings.







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By **MARIJKE COX**

Repeat prescriptions may be doing more harm than good

PATIENTS could be taking unnecessary and potentially dangerous medication for years if the monitoring of repeat prescriptions is left in their hands, health watchdogs have warned.

It follows a call by NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent urging people to have their prescriptions regularly reviewed by pharmacists in a bid to save the £7 million lost each year through wasted medicine.

Health bosses at the trust stressed people should request reviews if they are confused about what to take and when; have not had their medicines checked within a year; or if they have stopped taking the drugs.

A spokeswoman admitted that if a patient did not attend a medicine use review they could end up taking unnecessary drugs for years.

But watchdogs have criticised the NHS for putting the responsibility of ensuing medication is checked on patients, claiming it should be down to GPs to ensure reviews are made.

Katherine Murphy, chief executive of healthcare charity the Patients Association, warned: "Patients should of course take responsibility for their own medication and talk to their doctor if they have concerns," she said.

"However, primary care trusts must consider all patients when encouraging responsibility for people's own health.

"Unnecessary medicines cost the NHS millions every year and can be potentially dangerous if people take them for too long. GPs should be aware of what is being prescribed on repeat prescriptions and ensure patients are not taking medications they do not need."

Graham Hills, operational director at Kent LINk, an independent network of local people and groups working to improve health and social care, said the responsibility for monitoring of prescriptions should fall on GPs, pharmacists and patients.

But he admitted doctors needed to ensure vulnerable people received help in relation to repeat prescriptions, which are used for regular medication and given to a patient without them having to see their GP every time.

He said: "I think there is a responsibility all round, but for people who are vulnerable, who have chronic conditions or mental health problems, there needs to be help. It's not one size fits all."

Mr Hills said he supported the move by the NHS to try and put a stop to the amount of medicine wasted, which costs the county's health services £14 million a year – £7m in NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent, £5m in NHS West Kent and £2m in NHS Medway.

The staggering amount is blamed on people failing to review repeat prescriptions and therefore ordering and taking medication which is no longer needed. It has also been put down to people stockpiling medicines "just in case".

A spokeswoman at NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent said: "It is important patients' medication is reviewed as it could identify if they are taking medication they no longer need. The pharmacist will discuss any problems a patient is having with the patient's GP."

She warned that people who did not attend a review could end up taking unnecessary drugs for years.



RESPECTS: Mr Clifford at Blythe's grave

Cricket chief honours hero

KENT County Cricket Club's chief executive travelled to Belgium to pay his respects to former World War One hero Colin Blythe.

Jamie Clifford replaced a miniature cricket bat which had recently disappeared from the grave of the former Kent and England spin bowler, at St Jan, near Ypres.

Those present at the ceremony included former England captain Nasser Hussain and representatives from the Commonwealth Graves Commission among other dignitaries.

The service began with the Last Post followed by a prayer and minute's silence. The Reverend Bryan Llewellyn then dedicated the miniature bat, which was placed on the grave by Mr Clifford.

Colin Blythe made his Kent debut in 1899 – taking a wicket with his very first ball in first-class cricket – and went on to be one of the finest players of the early 20th century.

He served in the war with the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and was killed by random shell-fire on November 8, 1917.

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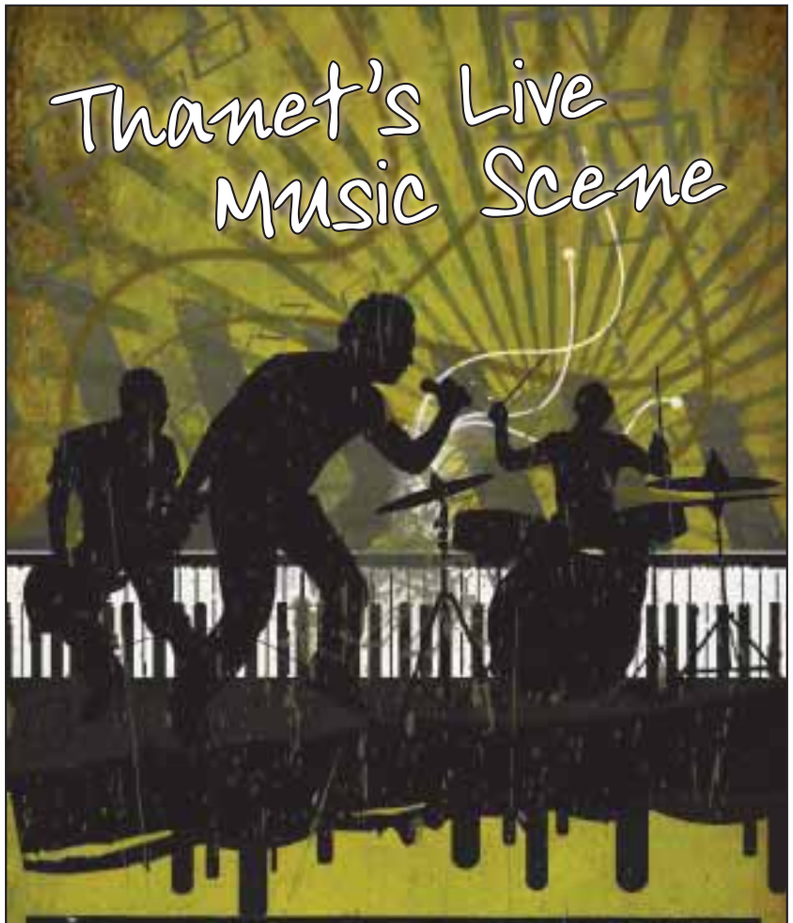
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Fears county may be about to kiss goodbye to a festive favourite

THE future supply of traditional English mistletoe is under threat after a huge decline in the plant in Kent, ***writes Nick Ames***.

Mistletoe thrives in established apple orchards, but such habitats have seen a big fall over the past 60 years, conservationists say.

Kent is one of the hardest hit areas of the country with a 90 per cent loss during the same period.

The National Trust is urging people to buy home-grown mistletoe in the run-up to Christmas.

Trust ecologist Peter Brash said it would be a "sad loss" if mistletoe disappeared from its traditional areas.

Mr Brash said: "Mistletoe is part of our Christmas heritage and has a special place in a wonderful winter landscape.

"It would be a sad loss if mistletoe disappeared altogether from its heartland. We could end up relying on imports of mistletoe from mainland Europe for those festive kisses."

The trust also wants people to ask where the mistletoe they are buying is sourced from.

Mr Brash added: "Ensuring your mistletoe comes from a sustainably managed, British source is good news all round.

"You will be supporting a small, homegrown industry while helping to ensure a future for mistletoe and the creatures that are dependent upon it."

Mistletoe is a parasitic plant that favours the domestic apple tree, but can also be found on lime, poplar and hawthorn trees across the UK.

The National Trust fears the decline of traditional apple orchards where mistletoe thrives is the reason for the shortage.

Environmental consultant Jonathan Briggs said: "Fast forward 10 or 20 years and the orchards won't be there.

"Mistletoe will accelerate the trees' deaths and it seems inevitable we will have a shortage of mistletoe in the future"

Mr Briggs – who keeps mistletoe in his house all year to ward off evil spirits – said mistletoe would migrate to bigger, non-orchard trees and so become harder to reach.

This could turn it into a much more expensive product or prompt people to rely on cheaper foreign imports.

"A Christmas kiss could become more expensive," he said.



As well as brightening up the house durng the festive period, mistletoe provides winter food for birds such as the blackcap and mistle thrush. It also supports six insects, including the rare mistletoe marble moth, some sap-sucking bugs and the appropriately named 'kiss-me-slow weevil'.

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'My father fooled the Nazis'

THE son of a former M15 officer is releasing a book about his father's involvement in a famous wartime deception plot against the Nazis, ***writes Marijke Cox***.

Author Nicholas Reed, from Folkestone, will reveal details of the daring plan, known as Operation Mincemeat, which saw German dictator Adolf Hitler misled and thousands of Allied soldiers saved during World War Two.

Mr Reed's father, Major Ronnie Reed, was an integral part of the deception and the new book – My Father Was The Man Who Never Was – due for release, tells his tale.

The 1943 plot involved a corpse in British Army uniform being planted on the coast of Spain with military plans inside a briefcase.

Spanish authorities, as predicted, allowed German intelligence to investigate and found information about a planned Allied attack on Greece and Sardinia.

But the plan was a fake to divert German resources away from Sicily – the real invasion target – and the body was not British officer Major William Martin but an unidentified Welsh tramp, who later became known as The Man Who Never Was.

Mr Reed said his father's photo was used on Major Martin's fake identity card after the mastermind behind the plan, intelligence officer Ewen Montagu, pointed out the uncanny resemblance between Major Reed and the dead man.

"My father was an electrical engineer and worked at the BBC, but he knew morse code and was asked to help supervise double agents," said Mr Reed. "He was the case officer for a double agent called Eddie Chapman, known as Zigzag.

"There was a meeting to discuss Agent Zigzag and Montagu saw my father and said he looked like the twin of the corpse they were planning to plant in Spain."

A photo of Major Reed was used on the identity card, which was to deceive the Germans into believing the body was fictitious Royal Marine Major Martin.

Mr Reed said: "Working with M15 must have been very exciting for him. My father told me about his career before he died 15 years ago. I have memorabilia including his identity card and the Iron Cross awarded to Eddie Chapman by Hitler."



PLOT: Mr Reed's father's ID card and Iron Cross received from Agent Zigzag

Mr Reed said: "Chapman was the only British agent to be awarded the Iron Cross.

"He came to Britain with orders to blow up an aircraft factory, but he told the British authorities when he got here," he said. "The factory was disguised to look as though it had been wrecked. When Zigzag went back to Germany for his next mission he received the award from the Fuhrer."

Chapman later gave Major Reed the medal. Mr Reed is holding an illustrated talk for Folkestone Local History Society on February 2, from 8pm, in Holy Trinity Church hall, Sandgate.

Archbishop's Christmas defence

THE Archbishop of Canterbury has defended Christmas against "weary annual attempts" to suppress it in case it offends people of other beliefs.

Dr Rowan Williams said those who try to ban nativity plays and carol-singing do not understand how people of all religions love the Christmas story and respect its message.

Other Christian leaders have also defended the religious nature of Christmas, including Dr John Sentamu, Archbishop of York.

Lord Carey, a former Archbishop of Canterbury, said Britain appeared to have become ashamed of Christmas.

And on his visit to Britain in September, Pope Benedict spoke of his concern at attempts to discourage Christmas celebrations. In an interview for the Radio Times, Dr Williams said: "The weary annual attempts by right-thinking people to ban or discourage nativity plays or public carol-singing out of sensitivity to the supposed tender consciences of other religions fail to notice that most people of other religions and cultures both love the story and respect the message.

"Christmas is one of the great European exports. You'll meet Santa Claus and his reindeer in Shanghai and Dar es Salaam – a long way from the North Pole.

"The story of the nativity is loved even in non-Christian contexts. One of the best and most sensitive recent film retellings was made by an Iranian Muslim company."








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Ex-minister's drugs decriminalisation call wins backing

By MARIJKE COX
marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk

A UNIVERSITY scholar has backed a controversial call made by a former drugs minister for illegal substances to be decriminalised.


Prof Alex Stevens

Alex Stevens, professor in criminal justice at the University of Kent, said former Labour cabinet minister Bob Ainsworth was right to push for improved regulation and is stating that the 'war on drugs' was an ongoing and costly failure.

Mr Ainsworth, who was in charge of drugs policy as a Home Office minister, suggested taking production and supply away from criminals and putting it in the hands of doctors and pharmacists so it could be regulated.

His proposals were immediately rejected by the Government and the leader of the opposition, Ed Miliband.

But Prof Stevens – author of new book Drugs, Crime and Public Health – said his own research had shown current legislation was a failure and had harmed vulnerable communities.

"My recent article in the British Journal of Criminology on decriminalisation in Portugal shows harmful drug use does not necessarily increase, and that significant savings in the costs of law enforcement and improvements in public health can follow," he said. "I put the case for progressive decriminalisation to the Society of Labour Lawyers earlier this week and it is right that Bob Ainsworth has made this call.

"My 15 years of research has shown how criminalisation has not reduced drug-related harm, either in the UK or internationally. Indeed, it shows illicit drug use is now widespread."

Last month, Prof Stevens backed a report co-written by former chief drugs adviser Prof David Nutt that alcohol was more harmful than heroin or crack. The controversial adviser was sacked last year by the previous Labour government for saying ecstasy was less harmful than other drugs.

Prof Stevens said: "While we are not condoning drug use, the implications of alcohol use need to be addressed. More people die from alcohol than heroin. Liver disease will be the leading cause of death in 10 years' time. Then there is the violence caused by alcohol and the money spent on clearing that up."

The findings of Prof Nutt's study revived debates over the classification of drugs, a subject at the heart of Prof Stevens' book.

It reveals how the criminalisation of drug users has not reduced drug-related harm, and punishment, such as prison, had failed to cut the illicit use of drugs. Prof Stevens said the UK needed to be bolder in taking evaluated steps towards more effective, evidence-based policies to increase freedom and reduce drug-taking.

"The thrust of my argument is that decriminalisation should be considered," he said. "When cannabis was classified down from a class B to a C with reduced punishment, cannabis use continued to fall. The idea that decriminalisation increases drug problems is not accurate. If people are going to take drugs they don't think about what class it is."

Scrabbling for praise

PUPILS from a Kent school have won the grand final of a national Scrabble competition.

Year five youngsters from Barham Primary spelled out the names of local attractions including Canterbury Cathedral and Howletts animal park to triumph in the Tell Us Your Scrabble Story contest.

"The class is so excited to have won and they had so much fun putting their entry together," said teacher Alison Webb.

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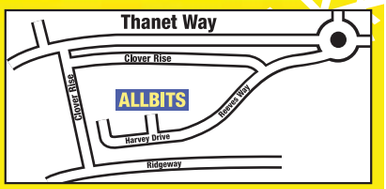
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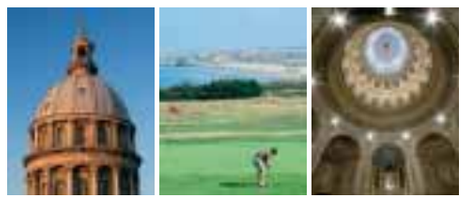
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An oarsome choice as sporting mentor

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

A DISABLED rower who seriously injured his right arm in a freak motorcycle accident has signed up to help inspire schoolchildren into sport.

Alistair McKean, 31, from Canterbury, is a two-time world champion in adaptive rowing and will drive home the importance of perseverance in his role as an athlete mentor in Sky Sports' Living for Sport scheme.

He is one of several sportsmen signed up to the programme – including Sittingbourne's wheelchair rugby player Steve Brown – who will visit schools across the UK and encourage pupils to be the best they can be across all areas of their lives.

Alistair told Archant KOS Media how his accident in June, 1999, turned him from a casual rower into an international star.

"I was riding my motorcycle when a pigeon flew out and hit me on my visor, sending me straight into the side of a lorry," he said.

"It was a completely freak accident that left me with eight breaks in my right arm and severe nerve damage. I spent eight weeks in hospital. I lost 80 per cent of the function in my arm and that meant my career as a carpenter and joiner was over.



ROLE MODEL: Alistair McKean

"For the first year or so after that I gave up on life in general because I didn't feel there was a lot out there for me any more. But I did a bit of soul-searching and found I needed to do something to make my life better or I would end up being very miserable and alone."

A member of Herne Bay Rowing Club, Alistair was introduced to the sport of adaptive rowing while retraining as a teacher at Canterbury Christ Church University.

He made his debut in the World Rowing Championships in Gifu, Japan, in 2005, winning gold in the coxed fours. He successfully defended the title a year later at Dorney Lake, Buckinghamshire.

"I know first-hand how much sport can truly help a person strive to get the best out of life," said Alistair.

"It's about so much more than just getting fit. Each different sporting activity can provide a scope of additional benefits that you can carry through into all aspects of your life, whether it be learning how to focus on the task at hand or developing the social skills necessary to be a team player.

"I plan to tell the children that even when events set them back in their lives, they should never give up. There's always something for everyone."

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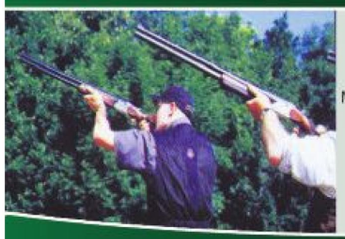
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Exhibition highlights how body of fallen

Final journey home of the Great War's Unknown Warrior

A MOBILE exhibition centred on the Unknown Warrior is to be shown at the Royal Engineers Museum in Gillingham.

By **NICK AMES**
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

It tells the tale of the unidentified soldier and others killed during the Great War, particularly men who lived along the route between Dover to London which was used to bring the former's body home.

The key exhibit is a stained glass window featuring a lone soldier looking out to sea to witness the arrival of HMS Verdun in 1920, with other panels dedicated to other soldiers featured by the project.



Dominique Bignall

One of these is Sergeant Richard Monty Daniel, a shipwright from Chatham Dockyard who died in 1916 while serving with the Royal East Kent Regiment. The other soldier is Private James Brill, a member of the Royal Marines Light Infantry Chatham battalion. Dominique Bignall is deputy curator at the museum. She said: "We tell the story of military engineering in the British Army and we are proud to host this travelling exhibition. "Our purpose is to let people know of the sacrifices made by soldiers in defence of this country. In World War One it was the policy of the Government not to ship bodies home, but bury them in graveyards near to where they fell. So the Unknown Warrior – and the many village war memorials – acted as a focus for the grief of those whose loved ones never made it home."

The idea for a Tomb of the Unknown Warrior came to light in 1916 when the Rev David Railton, serving as an Army chaplain on the Western Front, had seen a grave marked by a rough cross, which bore the pencil-written legend: An Unknown British Soldier.

He contacted the Dean of Westminster in 1920 proposing that an unidentified soldier buried with due ceremony in Westminster Abbey "amongst the kings" to represent the many hundreds of thousands of dead.

The idea was supported by the Dean and the Prime Minister David Lloyd George, but not at

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SKY SPORTS

soldier came to represent lost generation

first by King George V who feared it would reopen the wounds of a recently-concluded war.

But an outpouring of support from bereaved families ensured it went ahead.

Suitable remains were exhumed from battlefields and brought to the chapel at Saint-Pol, near Arras, France, on the night of November 7, 1920.

Two senior officers, Brigadier General LJ Wyatt and Lieutenant Colonel EAS Gell, went into the chapel alone. The remains were on stretchers, each covered by Union Flags, and the two officers did not know from which battlefield any individual body had come.

General Wyatt, with closed eyes, rested his hand on one of the bodies. The officers placed the body in a plain coffin and sealed it. The other bodies were then taken away for reburial.

The coffin stayed at the chapel overnight and on the afternoon of November 8 it was transferred, under guard, with troops lining the route, from Saint Pol to the medieval castle within the ancient citadel at Boulogne.

The following morning, two undertakers entered the castle library and placed the coffin into a casket of the oak timbers of trees from Hampton Court Palace. The casket was banded with iron and a medieval crusader's sword, chosen by the king personally from the royal collection, was affixed to the top and surmounted by an iron shield bearing the inscription 'A British Warrior who fell in the Great War 1914-1918 for King and Country'.



ABOVE: Arriving home in 1920
BELOW: Medals in the exhibition



The casket was shipped across the Channel and as the flotilla closed on Dover Castle it received a 19-gun Field Marshal's salute.

On the morning of November 11, 1920, the casket was placed on a gun carriage of the Royal Horse Artillery and drawn by six horses through immense and silent crowds.

As the cortege set off, a further Field Marshal's salute was fired in Hyde Park. The procession was then followed by the king, the royal family and ministers of state to Westminster Abbey, where the casket was borne into the west nave flanked by a guard of honour of 100 recipients of the Victoria Cross.

The coffin was then interred in the far western end of the nave, only a few feet from the entrance, in soil brought from each of the main battlefields, and covered with a silk pall. Servicemen stood guard as tens of thousands of mourners filed silently past.

• ***The exhibition opens at the Engineers Museum on Tuesday, January 11, and runs until the end of February.***

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Lost villages put on the map

By **NICK AMES**
nick.ames@kosmedia.co.uk

DETAILS of some of Kent's lost villages are set to be published in a new atlas of Britain – the first comprehensive volume of its type to be published in 40 years.

The Times Atlas of Britain will show how the country has changed over the years so forgotten settlements will be included in its pages.

Kent has a number of villages forgotten throughout the ages for varying reasons.

Among the settlements lost in time are several on the Romney Marsh, which were abandoned because of the Black Death, outbreaks of malaria or infertile soil.

Others were left by inhabitants because of the threat of invasion or raiding parties from the continent.

Editor Jethro Lennox said: "While compiling the first comprehensive atlas of its type to be published in the UK in over 40 years, we were not only interested in how the United Kingdom has changed geographically over time but the implications for the residents of our islands."

Among those featured in the book are Hampton-on-Sea, lost to coastal erosion in 1916 and sited close to Herne Bay.

All that remains is a part of the original pier, the Hampton Inn, and part of the coastal defences which are visible at low tide.

Some of the cottages in the lost settlement were built from the timbers of boats, and fishing was its main industry.

Threatened by the erosion of the coast and the encroachment of the sea the plight of the area was championed in the late 19th century by former Metropolitan Police officer Edmund Reid, one of the detectives attached to the Jack the Ripper inquiry.



The Black Death accounted for Dode, near Rochester, which was abandoned when its inhabitants were killed in the Middle Ages.

Malaria was a problem on the Romney Marsh from around 1500 to the mid-18th century because of mosquitoes living in pools of stagnant water.

Lost villages on the marsh have been identified by parish and court records, with the only surviving evidence of many being the walls of ruined churches.

Meanwhile, Ogarswick – mentioned in a census of 1851 – is remembered only by a solitary cross in the grounds of a farmhouse.

All that is left of the village of Hope is the remains of its church – sited in one of the bleakest and loneliest parts of the marsh.





LIFE ON THE EDGE: Photograph taken in 1910 of fishermen's cottages precariously balanced at Hampton-on-Sea, which was lost to coastal erosion in 1916, while church ruins are all that remain of Eastbridge (left) and Hope (right)

The 12th century ruins mark the centre of a settlement which was abandoned by most of its population because of the plague, although some lingered on for another couple of centuries.

Historic documents say a manor house and parsonage once existed and according to church records the bells of the ruin were taken to New Romney.

The site is near to that which is reputedly the site of a battle involving King Arthur.

A priest named Layamon compiled a history of Britain written in the 13th Century, in which he describes a battle between King Arthur's men and those of Mordred at Old Romney.

Eastbridge is the name of a road leading across the marsh from Dymchurch, but it was once a village.

All that remains is part of a church tower, accessible through a small wood.

Records say there was once a small population of just over 20 people living locally and it is also mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1087.

Broomhill is just a scattering of stones after it was flooded by a huge storm in 1287 with much loss of life, while Blackmanstone is just a bridge.

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Frontline soldiers bring glad tidings from Afghanistan

IT MAY not be the traditional British Christmas, but thousands of miles from home troops on the frontline are getting ready to celebrate the festivities.

And despite being away from their loved ones, our boys in Afghanistan are set to make the most of the festive season after seeing one of the bloodiest years since operations started in 2001, with 100 British Armed Forces deaths.

Trooper Jack Burnham, a Mastiff armoured fighting vehicle driver with the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment, admitted it would be strange being away from family, but said his comrades would help him to keep his spirits up.

"It is a bit like having your family around you, as the soldiers that you work with out here have become such good mates," he said.

The 20-year-old, from Greenhithe, has been in Afghanistan since October 18 patrolling the roads south of Gereshk, Helmand's second largest city, to make them safer for locals.

"One thing I did not expect was the positive reaction we are getting on our patrols," he said.

"The locals always greet us with a smile – which gets even bigger when we hand out a few sweets from our ration packs.

"You really get a feeling we're making things better and going to give them a brighter future."



ON TOUR: Top left: Tpr Jack Burnham and Cpt Martin Willson will enjoy Christmas overseas

Tpr Burnham said sharing experiences and challenges with his comrades on the frontline will make them friends for life.

"We all know we're there for each other," he said.

"So, Christmas away from home will still be hard, but made that much easier by the boys around us."

Experienced soldier Captain Martin Willson, originally from Dover but now based in Suffolk – the home of his regiment – also admitted how hard it was being away from home.

The 44-year-old, who attended Dover Grammar School for Boys, is on his third deployment to Afghanistan serving in the Helmand Province with 23 Engineer Regiment (Air Assault) Corps of Royal Engineers.

Buzzword

"This is my third tour of Afghanistan and the changes over that time are remarkable," he said.

"From the beginning we all realised this was going to be a long-term operation and one that would take time to resolve properly – 'tactical patience' is the buzzword.

"We are operating in a culturally-diverse, tribal environment with many frustrations and hurdles to overcome – but failure is not in our vocabulary and we will set the conditions for Afghanistan to move forward."

Capt Willson is married to Ann and has four sons. His parents, two brothers and sister still live in Dover.

"Being away from the family is always the hardest part of any tour, however enjoyable or successful it is," he said.

Former soldier and now singer James Blunt is returning to the frontline this Christmas with Welsh singer Katherine Jenkins to perform for troops who are away from their families.



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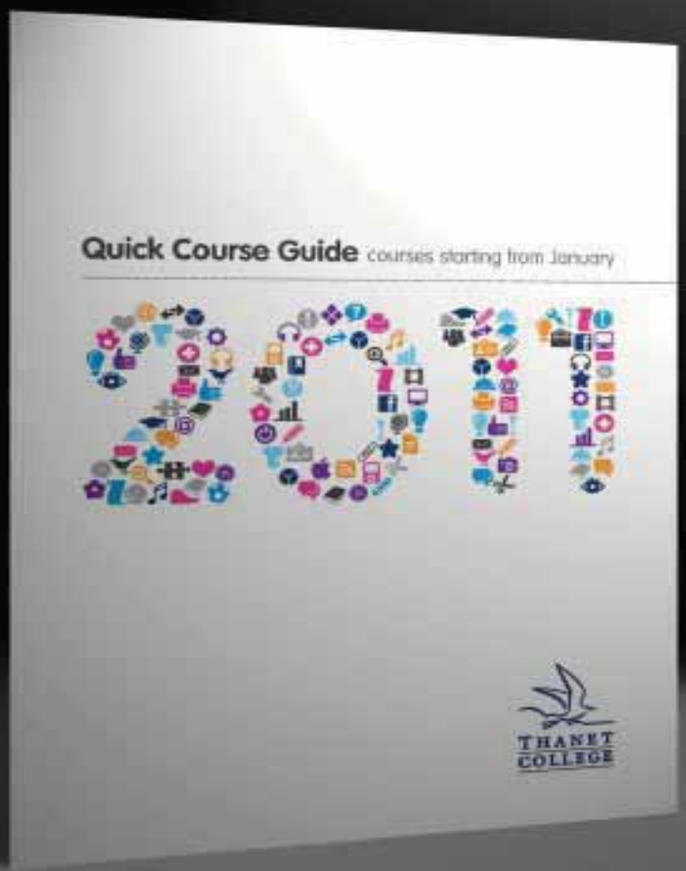
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'Southeastern job cuts plan could compromise safety'

WORKERS on Southeastern trains are to be balloted for strike action in a row over jobs, ***writes Nick Ames.***

Members of the RMT union based at Charing Cross and Victoria will be voting in the next few weeks, and any action would have a knock-on effect at Kent stations.

The RMT said plans to reduce the number of team leader posts from 14 to eight would compromise safety.

Southeastern said the changes, already in place at two other stations, were working well and operational safety had not been compromised.

It said they had been implemented at Cannon Street and London Bridge stations following consultation with the RMT.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said: "Southeastern has been caught out yet again cutting staffing and operational costs to maximise profits in a move that will not only cause chaos on the platforms at Victoria and Charing Cross but which would also compromise safety.

"Southeastern has got the nerve to jack up fares by 13 per cent while hacking back on platform operations that will delay and disrupt the dispatch process while putting their staff in the firing line as and when things go wrong."

The ballot closes on January 4.

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Snow piles on the agony of driving

I AM amazed at the amount of people driving about with piles of snow left on the roofs of their cars.

Do they not realise that when the car moves and heats up, the snow will slide off and block their vision through their windscreen?

And a big thank you (not) to the lorry driver who sped past me the other day, completely covering my windscreen in slush and snow – thank God I was able to get my windscreen clear to carry on driving.

That's my moan over.

Vicky Olding, Halling

Network Rail, not council to blame

I wish to respond to the totally incorrect and very unhelpful letter printed on page 20 of last week's KoS.

Swale council contributed to an article that appeared in your sister paper YourSwale on November 24, stating very clearly that we are angry with people accusing us of blocking the application for the disabled lifts in Faversham.

We state once again that this accusation is a falsehood and utterly inaccurate.

Far from blocking the application, the council has approved the application for the lifts subject to one planning condition.

We granted listed building consent for the disabled lifts to serve the platforms, with a condition requiring that the rather modern shafts should have a timber-boarded covering in order to blend in with the rest of the platform buildings found on this Grade-II listed station complex.

Indeed, the town council agreed with our view it should be put up.

The council has two obligations here. We have a duty to support the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), but we also have an obligation to protect the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

The decision taken has, we believe, satisfied all of these obligations, promoting the DDA through granting permission for these lifts, but preserving the character and appearance of the listed building through the addition of the above-mentioned condition.

Network Rail has said it is not proceeding with the lifts. This is entirely their decision. We have granted the approval and it is they who are not proceeding.

We have in fact confirmed to Network Rail that if they do still want to proceed without the matchboarding they can submit an application to remove the condition. No such application has been received.

James Freeman, head of planning services, Swale Borough Council

Aspirations dashed by Gove's decision

Open letter to Education Secretary Michael Gove:

I am writing to you to express my deep concern over the proposed scrapping of the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

In Medway, for the academic year 2009-10, 3,134 young people received EMA. For many, that payment was one of the key reasons why they were able to stay on in education.

Unfortunately, Medway contains a number of deprived neighbourhoods, for example in my own ward, Chatham Central.

EMA is one way of helping young people from those disadvantaged backgrounds aim higher, gain an education and raise their aspirations. These are young people who might otherwise be blighted by unemployment and poverty.

To be able to receive the full EMA payment of £30, household income is required to be below £20,817 per year. Thus it is particularly targeted to those low income families for whom the extra cash boost makes all the difference.

The sum of £30 may seem insignificant to some, but as a survey carried out by the NUS in 2008 found, 65 per cent of participants on the highest EMA rate of £30 stated they could not continue to study without EMA.

Not only do young people choose education with EMA, but results improve. Research by the Institute for Fiscal Studies shows attainment at GCSE and A-level by recipients of EMA has risen by five to seven percentage points since EMA was introduced; by even more for those living in the most deprived neighbourhoods.

I do not believe your proposed 'Learner Support Fund' offers a viable alternative. The amount of money will be tiny compared to the budget for EMAs, and with subjective judgments on eligibility, this will leave thousands without the vital financial support they need.

For those who do stay on in education, this increased hardship is before they even consider university and exponential tuition fee increases. Or alternatively, for those who can no longer choose education, it will be the same families losing £30 a week in EMA who will be losing housing and council tax benefit, working tax credits, childcare tax credits and others.

I believe that scrapping the EMA will raise barriers to participation in further education, specifically for those from less well-off backgrounds; denying many young people the future they might have aspired to.

I therefore urge you to reconsider this damaging policy.

Councillor Paul Godwin, Labour leader on Medway Council

OPINION: TRUTH BEHIND THE MESSAGE

The Bishop of Dover, The Right Reverend **TREVOR WILLMOTT** says the world needs to be surprised time and again for the meaning of Christmas to come over

IN AUGUST I received my first charity Christmas catalogue. Early in September I noticed the 'back to school' aisles in our supermarket were transformed into the 'seasonal gifts' aisle.

A survey recently conducted by a large retailer showed that nearly half of those questioned admitted to buying Christmas presents in September.

But despite the presence of Christmas in the shops seemingly getting earlier and earlier each year, Christmas usually manages to take me by surprise.

It seems such a short time since last Christmas that I feel there must surely be some mistake.

I remember as a child thinking Christmas would never come, the waiting seemed almost unbearable; the longed-for presents, hidden on the top of the wardrobe in my parents' bedroom which might, after all be for someone else; excitement and expectation coming to a glorious meeting point on Christmas morning.



The one sad thing about Christmas is all too often our commercial world closes Christmas down precisely at the moment when it begins.

The last few days before Christmas are often replaced by the early onset of yet another sale season.

Decorations are dismantled in homes and shops just days after Christmas by those eager to move into the New Year unencumbered.

Why is it that, like the supermarket shelves of December 26, after all the excitement and charm of Christmas, we all seem empty and unchanged?

Why is it the January sales, the racks of unsold items at rock bottom prices and the zero-per cent-finance, nothing-to-pay-until-next-year offers don't bring us the joy we felt before Christmas?

The answer is simple. The love God demonstrated to us by coming to earth as a vulnerable baby does not sit easily with the power structures of our world, its acquisitiveness, commercialism and competition, its contempt for those who are different from us and its contempt for the poor.

What kind of god came to earth at Christmas? Not a god of power. Not a god of money or possession. But a God who shows us the depth of his love for us by being one with us.

At Bethlehem in the stable, God is with us in weakness, coming into all the human chaos and confusion as a helpless new born child. He does not stand apart from us, but chooses to know what it is to be human from the dependence of childhood to the darkness of death.

He comes as gently as an infant child to share in all our growing, our living, our loving, our grieving and our guiding.

He will not force himself upon us, but he longs for us to recognise him by our own free choice.

Day after day he lays before us quiet and undemanding signs of his presence, wanting us to stay long enough to read them and recognise him and go with him as we journey through the world.

As with all good things in life we need time to really appreciate Christmas and to explore its richness. We need time to understand why God loves us and to understand not just that God loves us, but that God is entirely love.

That's why I have come to treasure afresh every Christmas. It is why I believe the world needs to be surprised time and time again by the Christmas message and its hope.

For I have come to learn that in the birth of Jesus Christ in that stable in Bethlehem all my questions begin to be answered.

The Christmas message is a guiding star which sets our direction.

To the humility and love of God there can be but one response – the humility and the love of men and women who would faithfully follow its light to that place, that home, where they, and we, will know ourselves to be loved, world without end.

It seems to me that we need every Christmas that God can send us to allow this sort of love to sink more deeply into our lives.

May the joy of the angels; the eagerness of the shepherds; the perseverance of the wise men and the obedience of Joseph and Mary and the peace of the Christ Child be yours this Christmas.

KOS media COMMENT

Cold comfort after the early sparkle

WHILE the snow initially causes excitement – with children dragging out their sledges and workers hoping for a day off – the reality soon starts to hit home.

Because with snow, ice and freezing temperatures becoming a common occurrence for the British winter, soon we will have no excuses for letting the country grind to a halt. "We're not used to it" just won't wash any more.

It's crucial that we adapt, because although initial flurries of the white stuff bring out the child in most of us, after days of blizzards, gridlocked traffic, cancelled trains, icy stumbles and cabin fever, it's perhaps not as magical as we once thought.

And even worse, the impact on the economy will leave such a dent that those few snow days off work could stretch to more as people lose their jobs due to businesses failing and shops shutting.

Kent needs to adapt to make sure the county stays up and running, and people need to prepare for winter, particularly with their cars, to help to keep it moving.

There will be times when problems caused by the snow are inevitable – no one denies that travelling in the snow isn't easy – but getting snow tyres or rallying together to see if someone with a 4x4 can get people to work will all help.

The economic downturn was something we couldn't really control, but with this we can all do a little bit to keep our county open for business.

Celebration time – and hard-earned

IT'S been a tough year for everyone with all the financial uncertainty, but now is the time to settle down with family and friends and celebrate all the things we have to be thankful for – the things that really matter. So to all our readers, have a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year, from everyone at Archant KOS Media.

Snow report: Could do better

So how did Britain perform in the snow?

Well, three months ago The Independent newspaper suggested the Government should buy in half a million tonnes of road salt from abroad. Nothing was done and now already a quarter of the entire national stock of road grit has been used up.

Secondly, weather forecasts could have been more accurate.

Thirdly, snow wasn't cleared or gritted promptly from pavements and so on.

Why was there no emergency plan from the Government for the 1.5 million on the dole to be offered an extra fiver a day to their dole money to clear snow?

They'd have probably been glad of the extra cash in the run-up to Christmas.

There was also no post for the week, even though my milkman managed to get round (except for one very bad day).

My local bus route had not been gritted so I rang KCC and was told it was not on the computer to be gritted. I also asked about another bus route where my sister lives and was told that wasn't on the schedule either. If they don't grit bus routes then what do they grit? How are people to get to work or the shops?

Meanwhile, millions of days were taken off work. I am retired but in all my years at work I never took a day off because of snow. If I could not ride my motorbike I caught the bus, and if I could not bus I walked.

And that's not mentioning the chaos on the roads and trains, and the closed schools which hit the headlines.

So the UK's performance out of 10? Like the temperatures, minus two.

Marc Hurstfield, Northfleet

CONTINUED ON PAGE 35

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS

Including family announcements in partnership with the Kent registration service

To register Births, Marriages and Deaths contact the Kent registration service on 0845 824 7400

For advertising announcement enquiries telephone Kent on Sunday on 01303 817150

BIRTHS

CROSSLEY

Caroline Fullman and Simon Crossley are pleased to announce the arrival of Georgia Lily Crossley on the 12th December 2010 at Kent and Canterbury Hospital.

JONES

Steve Jones and Helen Kitto are pleased to announce the birth of Fraser Conrad Jones, born on the 6th December 2010. Younger brother to Harvey, Oliver and Martha.

MILLER

Penny Charlotte Miller born on 8th November 2010. Daughter to proud parents Steve and Gemma, sister to Archie and Niamh.

TRUONG

Steve, Gina and Heather celebrate the birth of their new baby Rosa on 23rd November 2010 at Maidstone Hospital.

WALKER

Darren and Julie Walker of Herne Bay are delighted to announce the birth of Oliver William Frederick Walker on 20th November 2010. A brother for Alfie Brian Derek Walker.

DEATHS

HACKNEY

Leonard Walter Hackney, aged 83 years, died on 5th December 2010 after a long illness in Maidstone Hospital. Much loved Father, Grandfather, Great Grandfather and Brother. Funeral Service at Vinters Park on Tuesday 21st December at 11.45. Flowers from immediate family only, donations to John Day Ward, Maidstone Hospital please via Paul Rowland, Penenden Heath.

POLLARD

Brian John Pollard on the 13th December 2010, aged 84, dearly loved husband to Joan, father to Christopher and grandfather to Alison. Funeral Services at Linton Church at 12 noon on Thursday 23rd December 2010. Only family flowers. The family would wish for donations to be made to the Heart of Kent Hospice.

SARGENT

Regret to announce that Mavis Sargent of Wrotham died peacefully on 13th December 2010. For funeral arrangements please contact Sears of Barming.

Thank you for your rememberance cash

On behalf of Hall Place Enterprise Centre, Canterbury Christ Church University and Jeremy Kemp, we would like to thank all those who attended the event over Remembrance weekend and also for the kind donations and the wonderful feedback about the collection, which has been amazing.

A big thank you also goes to all who helped us in promoting the exhibition by displaying posters, postcard flyers, website insertions and also word of mouth through many related associations.

A total of £409.14 was donated, which goes to the two charities Help for Heroes and the British Legion Poppy Appeal.

Jenny Overy, Canterbury

Women urged to look after their hearts

Help us beat heart disease, one laugh at a time. Just 35 per cent of women in the South East know heart disease is the biggest killer of UK women.

According to our survey, 58 per cent believe it to be breast cancer. But the reality is that heart disease kills three times more women than breast cancer.

We at the British Heart Foundation are running a campaign to challenge these statistics and quite literally put the heart centre-stage for women.

We've got together with Victoria Wood and more of the UK's best loved comedians to host the Angina Monologues, a night of comedy focused on affairs of the heart. The show has now been taken from the stage to the screen, and women can watch the Angina Monologues on Sky1 at 9.30pm on Christmas Day.

With everything from failed chat-up lines to dodgy diets, Victoria and the likes of Jo Brand, Katy Brand and more are sure to have sitting rooms in the county filled with hearty laughter. So make a date with all the women in your life, and get ready for a great night's entertainment.

If you can't wait until Christmas Day, visit www.anginamonologues.co.uk for some tidbits from the show and important information on how to cherish your heart.

Betty McBride, director of policy and communications, British Heart Foundation

I voted Tory but got Lib Dem instead

Having voted Conservative at the last election I now find we have a Lib Dem government that polled the lowest of the three.

I really believed it would be a waste of time voting Conservative with David Cameron in control but thought I would give it a go only to find out I was right.

Cameron has allowed Nick Clegg far too many policies and far too few for us.

Also Mr Cameron has broken every promise he made before the election – just like Blair did – and on top of that seems to think he is a powerhouse in Europe when he has already shown us just how powerless he is.

He certainly likes the limelight there whilst achieving nothing.

Listen to the people Mr Cameron and give us a referendum, and all else will be forgiven.

RE Tucker, Sheerness.

Are the Conservatives progressive enough?

I was heartened to read about the Tory MP and deputy speaker of the commons, Nigel Evans, who has just come out as being gay.

Politics really does seem to be evolving; in fact the modern Conservative party seems to be the most progressive party in the country. I am sure this must also be the case for the Conservatives in Kent.

Labour was once thought to be the party of fair play and inclusiveness, but in reality it has nearly always been the Conservative Party that has led the way.

Examples include: William Wilberforce's campaign to abolish the slave trade; Benjamin Disraeli elected as Britain's first Jewish prime minister; and Margaret Thatcher's election as the country's first, and so far only, woman prime minister.

But my question is, will Kent's main political parties actually find enough female and minority candidates for us to choose from come the local council elections in May?

Rupert Thurgo, Ramsgate.

Disabled could lose their independence

In the Comprehensive Spending Review the chancellor announced the Government would be removing the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for those people who live in residential care homes.

Disability charities and organisations such as Mencap are campaigning against this decision. We are all concerned that, as an unintended consequence of this proposal, people with a learning disability will no longer be able to afford to go out and meet with friends, participate in external social activities and engage with their communities.

I believe the Government has misunderstood how disabled people use this important benefit. Without this vital lifeline, many disabled people in residential care will lose much of their independence.

Caroline Phippen, Sevenoaks.

Helpful teenagers break the stereotype

As the snow fell today I noticed the postman in his van stuck on the hill outside our house.

Two teenage boys were attempting to push him up the hill. I decided to go out and give them a hand and a man with a spade came along, which finally got him on his way.

The teenagers were huffing in true teenage fashion but after I'd returned to my house I noticed they'd hung around and helped push several more vehicles up the hill.

Not what we expect from the usual teenagers and I'm sure they'd be embarrassed by any thanks, but they did a great job so well done boys. Your parents would be proud of you.

Julie Solly, Chartham.

Speak up for the autistic in your area

As a supporter of the National Autistic Society (NAS) living in the area, I wanted to make other people affected by autism aware that the statutory guidance for the Autism Act 2009 was published on December 17.

This is a landmark victory following three years of campaigning .

This guidance sends a clear message to all local authorities and NHS trusts telling them to ensure they are meeting the needs of people with autism. Now this has been introduced, people can start campaigning locally to make sure the lives of people with autism are improved. I urge people to take action now by contacting their local director of adult social care services and asking when they can expect reforms to happen.

This can be done through the NAS website at www.autism.org.uk/dhguidance.

Marie Turtle, Dover.

Dignity is a matter of life and death

We are writing to thank supporters of the Dying Matters Coalition.

With hundreds of members in the area, we are starting to transform our society's culture of silence around death and bereavement.

During 2010 Dying Matters has worked with care homes, hospices, PCTs, funeral and legal service providers, retirement organisations and charities, many older people and community groups, and faith and belief groups to make talking about dying easier.

We have supported communities, schools, older people, GPs and many hard-to-reach groups to break the taboo around discussing dying well and a good death.

Our members are discussing their plans openly, reflecting the change in public attitudes that we need to see for success and to make good end-of-life care for all a priority.

Thank you all for your commitment, and best wishes for the New Year.

Eve Richardson, chief executive, National Council for Palliative Care
Hilary Fisher, director, Dying Matters

Help to revitalise life of those in need

It's easy to forget what Christmas is supposed to be about – thinking of others.

As we relax with our families to enjoy the festive season, it's important to spare a thought for those who may not be able to take such simple pleasures for granted.

For the UK's disabled people and those who care for them, life can be an unrelenting struggle with poverty, isolation and discrimination.

It's a sad fact that, even in this day and age, disabled people remain among the most disenfranchised and vulnerable members of society. This Christmas, I'd like to offer your readers the opportunity to help us change that.

I work for Vitalise, a wonderful charity that provides desperately-needed respite breaks for disabled people and carers at our accessible centres around the UK.

Our breaks are an absolute lifeline, enabling our guests to restore their ability to cope and rediscover their zest for life. Without the opportunities we provide, life would be very bleak indeed.

But we simply couldn't do what we do without the generosity of the individuals who selflessly support our work. So why not resolve to make a real difference to someone else's life in 2011?

There are so many ways you can help, from something as simple as making a donation or buying your gifts via our webshop, www.buy.at/vitalise, through to taking part in a fundraising event or sparing some time to volunteer at one of our centres.

It's your chance to spread some lasting goodwill.

We really need your help. If you would like to support Vitalise, please call 0845 345 1972 or visit www.vitalise.org.uk.

Colin Brook, Vitalise



KOS

Reader Holidays

KOS 51

Winter Warmer Party

Warner Bembridge Coast Hotel, Isle of Wight - Over 40s only



Friday, January 14, 2011

Our Winter Warmer Party - for over 40s only - is at Bembridge Coast, Warner's luxury hotel on the Isle of Wight. Enjoy quality accommodation, good food, live nightly entertainment and a Free Bar.

INCLUDES: Free Bar 3.30pm to 11pm Friday and 12noon to 11pm Saturday (& Sunday) - house beers, spirits & mixers, wine by the glass • 2 dinners and 2 breakfasts • Entertainment every night • En-suite Ambassador room with TV, tea/coffee tray - upgrades available • Leisure facilities: Indoor pool & sauna • Return Car Ferry

SELF-DRIVE 2 or 3 NIGHTS DRINKS-INCLUSIVE FROM £149pp Quote WB1

Bournemouth Winter Deals

at the centrally-located Suncliff & Cliffeside Hotels

Arrive: Mondays, January 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31, 2011 (4 or 7 nights) or Fridays, January 7, 14, 21 & 28, 2011 (3 or 7 nights)

Join us for a Winter Warmer break in Bournemouth where the weather is milder and the outlook brighter. Stay at the Cliffeside or Suncliff Hotel, nicely located in the East Cliff area, just a 10-minute walk to the resort's vibrant centre, award winning gardens and pier. Enjoy Half-Board accommodation and at least 2 nights' entertainment (4 nights on a 7-night stay).





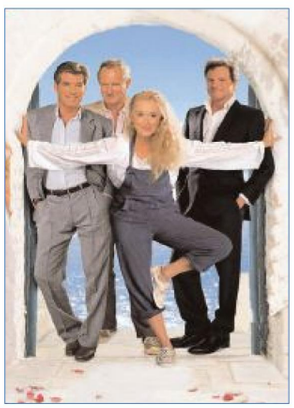
PRICE INCLUDES:

- 3, 4 or 7 nights sharing a twin or double-bedded en-suite room
- Breakfast & dinner each day
- At least 2 nights' entertainment (4 nights on a 7-night stay)

SELF-DRIVE 3 NIGHTS £89pp 4 NIGHTS £115pp 7 NIGHTS £189pp Quote BCI-KOS (Cliffeside) Quote BSI-KOS (Suncliff)

Mamma Mia Party

Warner Bembridge Coast Hotel, Isle of Wight - Over 50s only



Friday, February 25, 2011

Join us for a party where the name of the game is fun. We're rekindling the 70s & 80s when Abba's songs were on everyone's lips.

PRICE INCLUDES: FREE drinks from 3.30pm to 11pm Friday, 12noon to 11pm Saturday & Sunday. Includes house beers & spirits, house wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers, tea & coffee • Dinners & Breakfasts • Mamma Mia movie screening • Abba Tribute Band • Variety entertainment • En-suite Ambassador room with TV, tea/coffee tray - upgrades available • Leisure facilities: Indoor pool & sauna • Return Car Ferry

SELF-DRIVE 3 NIGHTS DRINKS-INCLUSIVE £239pp Quote MW2-KOS

Mamma Mia Party

Warner Bodelwyddan Castle, North Wales - Over 50s only



Friday, March 25, 2011

Join us for a unique Mamma Mia Party - for over 50s only - in beautiful North Wales. Warner's Bodelwyddan Castle Hotel will resound to the sights and sounds of Abba. Enjoy free drinks and nightly entertainment including a screening of Mamma Mia the Movie and an Abba tribute act.

INCLUDES: Free Bar 6pm to 11pm daily - house beers, spirits & mixers, wine by the glass • Entertainment including a Mamma Mia the Movie screening and Abba tribute act • 3 dinners & 3 breakfasts • En-suite Ambassador room with TV, tea/coffee tray - upgrades available

SELF-DRIVE 3 NIGHTS DRINKS INCLUSIVE £299pp Quote BC3

Corinth Canal, Greek Isles & Istanbul

Escorted Rail-Cruise - afternoon departure from London



Departures: May 5, June 14, September 2 & October 2, 2011

PORTS OF CALL:

• Embark France - Marseilles • Italy - Genoa • Greece - Katakolon, Santorini, Mykonos, Piraeus & Corinth Canal • Turkey - Istanbul • Sicily - Messina • Disembark Marseilles

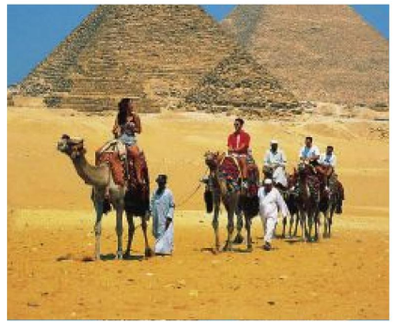
INCLUDED:

- Escorted throughout
- Champagne Check-in at London St Pancras
- Daytime rail travel: London-Marseille-London
- Overnight stay in Lille or Paris outbound
- 10 night Full Board cruise on the Louis Coral
- All transfers abroad
- Full ABTA financial protection

12 DAYS FROM £1149pp Quote CG-KOS

Eastern Mediterranean

Escorted Rail-Cruise - afternoon departure from London



Departures: March 12 & November 12, 2011

PORTS OF CALL:

• Embark France - Marseilles • Malta - Valletta • Egypt - Alexandria & Port Said • Israel - Ashdod • Cyprus - Limassol • Crete - Heraklion • Italy - Naples & Genoa • Disembark in Marseilles

INCLUDED:

- Escorted throughout
- Champagne Check-in at London St Pancras
- Daytime rail travel: London-Marseille-London
- Overnight stay in Lille or Paris outbound
- 12 night Full Board cruise on the Louis Majesty
- All transfers abroad
- Full ABTA financial protection

14 DAYS FROM £1099pp Quote ME-KOS

Menton Lemon Festival & Nice Carnival

Escorted Holiday by Rail - afternoon departure from London



Departs February 20, 2011

Join us for a colourful break on the French and Italian Rivieras including visits to Menton Lemon Festival Garden of Lights and Nice Carnival Flower Parade. Enjoy Free Drinks every night at the hotel in Diano Marina and return rail travel between London and Nice in the south of France.

INCLUDED:

• Champagne check-in at London St Pancras • Escorted throughout • Afternoon departure on Eurostar to Lille • 1 night hotel B&B in Lille • TGV rail travel to Nice • 4 nights in Diano Marina at the Piccolo Hotel with 4 buffet breakfasts & 4 dinners with free wine & water PLUS Free tea/coffee daily, PLUS nightly Free bar - house wine/beers/spirits 6pm to 12midnight • 1 evening with entertainment • Included excursions • Return rail travel to London • All transfers abroad • Full ABTA financial protection

6 DAYS SEMI ALL-INCLUSIVE £699pp Quote LM2-KOS

Tuscany & Viareggio Carnival

Escorted Holiday by Rail - afternoon departure from London



Departs March 4, 2011

Come with us to Viareggio - home to Italy's most spectacular carnival with colourful floats featuring huge papier-mâché puppets. We also visit Pisa, Lucca, Florence and San Gimignano. Travel by rail each way: From London to Paris, then overnight to Florence in private cabins.

INCLUDED:

• Champagne check-in at London St. Pancras (1 glass of Champagne or 1 tea/coffee or orange juice) • Escorted throughout • Afternoon departure on Eurostar to Paris • Paris to Florence on Artesia overnight sleeper in a 2-berth cabin – outbound and return • 5 nights at the 3 star Hotel Kyrton in Forte dei Marmi • 5 breakfasts and 3 dinners • 1 Tuscan dinner with live music • Entrance to the Circuit Parade in Viareggio • Guided tour of Florence • Included excursions • Return rail travel to London • All transfers abroad • Full ABTA financial protection

8 DAYS PART HALF BOARD £999pp Quote TV3-KOS

KOS MEDIA
www.propertyforkent.co.uk

Review

Rollermania is back



LES MCKEOWN TELLS US WHY HE LOVES US LIKE WE LOVE HIM

PROPERTY IX-XIV
CROSSWORD VI
FOOD & DRINK V
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Review

Rollermania is back as **Nick Ames** meets The Bay City Rollers singer Les McKeown

FOR A short but noisy and fervent period in the mid-70s Scottish band The Bay City Rollers – with their tartan scarves and ankle length tartan trousers – were one of the most famous acts in the UK.

The classic line-up of singer Les McKeown, guitarists Eric Faulkner and Stuart Wood, bass player Alan Longmuir and his brother, drummer Derek, recorded a series of hit songs and sent a million girls' hearts a-flutter into the bargain.

Big hit Shang-a-Lang reached number two in the charts, Summerlove Sensation achieved just one place lower in the hit parade and All of Me Loves All Of You got to number four. Rollermania was well and truly here and critics were making comparisons to The Beatles.

A cover of the Four Seasons song Bye Bye Baby stayed at the top of the singles charts for six weeks in 1975 and its follow-up Give a Little Love also reached the top spot.

But as the decade wore on, punk came along and the Rollers' popularity faded.

Personnel changed and the members got older at a time when being in your late 20s was old for a pop musician – especially one whose fan base was made up mainly of teenage girls.

Rollermania is also the name of a show currently featuring Les McKeown with hit songs, reminiscences and audience chat which recalls the heyday of 70s pop.

And one of the most frequently asked questions is "Why 'Bay City Rollers'?"

Les said: "The story goes that the band was originally called Saxon when it was formed in 1967. But a couple of years later there were American bands coming over here and having great success.

American influence

"The band fancied an American name and so they got a map of the USA and decided they'd throw darts at it and see if any landed near some location which sounded good.

"Well one landed on Bay City, Michigan, which is famous for its 'rollers' or big waves.

"So that's how the name came about. Locally, the city's American football team is now called the Bay City Rollers – so they took our name back."

At the height of their success the band were frequently mobbed, fans fainted and stage invasions took place on a regular basis.

It was more than an 18-year-old Les had ever dreamt of.

"It was mad," he said. "Even when I was loving the idea of being a pop star I never expected it. The fans far exceeded anything I imagined. In some ways it was great but it also could be worrying, fans throwing themselves in front of cars, hurling themselves at you, fainting and all the rest.

"We needed barriers, security – all the trappings of a major act.

"But it wasn't always like that. When I started with the band we were playing to audiences older than ourselves – working men's clubs, those sorts of places.

"But then we did TV shows like Crackerjack and younger people started to see us on the screen. So our live audience got younger until we were being watched by teens and preteenagers. We'd still play these smoky venues in an evening but we'd be doing shows at 5pm, 6pm or so at places where young girls could come with their parents. It all helped with the ticket sales.

"I did try and take it all in my stride – all the adulation and screaming that is – I thought this is my job. How it affected my ego I don't know, maybe the other members of the band could say."

In 1976 the group was on tour and successful in the USA – but back home a musical revolution was brewing.

"We are in our own bubble, playing pop when punk came along," said Les. "It was never that big in the USA outside of cities like New York. And so we were not too aware of it, until we returned to the UK."

Punk pioneers The Ramones always cited the Rollers as an influence, with the New York foursome's anthem Blitzkreig Bop drawing on the Scottish band's early hits.





GIVE A LITTLE LOVE: Les McKeown admits it's not like the old days, but he's still enjoying entertaining fans in Rollermania

Les said: "I thought punk was great and The Ramones I love, I saw them at a little club, some sleazy place in New York and they were brilliant. I got to know their manager as well.

"A lot of great things came out of punk – but at the time it meant the end for a lot of 'dinosaur' bands, and bubblegum pop didn't come out of it that well either.

"The Sex Pistols were always billed as the 'anti-rollers' but they stole some of our tartan look."

Les describes his new show as a "living book".

"It's a little snippet from the past," he said. "I come on stage and sing the first song I ever performed with the band. It's called Remember. Then there is a bit of a scripted monologue and some stories.

"The bass player has a little light he can illuminate if he thinks 'Les you're going on too long' but I tell stories and ad-lib with the audience. They are all Roller fans, some in their late 30s some in their late 40s."

But he admits it is not the same as when Rollermania made national news and the band were in danger of being ripped apart by screaming girls every time they played.

"Nothing fits that bill anymore," Les said. "But there is still the satisfaction of putting on a professional show and having a great deal of fun doing it."

• Rollermania plays the Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells, on Tuesday, February 15. Tickets are £18.50 and available from 01892 530613 or www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk.

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Hop right into Santa's world

THERE'S still time to pay one last late visit to Santa Claus before the big day arrives.

He will be at Santa's Magical Kingdom at the Hop Farm in Paddock Wood up until Christmas Eve, after which he'll be setting off to deliver presents around the world.

Perfectly timed for the school holidays the attraction offers a two-hour long Christmas experience with the chance to extend your day to include some of the Hop Farm's other attractions, and all at no extra cost.

Chief executive Carl Partridge said: "We're pleased with the positive feedback we've had for this year's event.

"The new 4D cinema has been a real hit with both children and adults, as has the new interactive ice walkway."

Santa's Magical Kingdom is a complete entertainment experience combining special effects, multisensory technology and professional set design to create the splendour of Father Christmas' Arctic home.

After following the snow-covered Christmas tree path that leads to the secret entrance, families can enjoy the 4D cinema, Enchanted Forest and icy North Pole before posting letters to Santa in the Post Office.

Next meet Santa's trusty reindeer before helping the elves in the craft workshop and listening to stories with Mother Christmas.

Tickets are now on sale at £35 per person until Christmas Eve. To book or for more information call 01622 872068, or visit the attraction's website at www.santasmagicalkingdom.co.uk.



Walk in a winter wonderland

THIS Christmas holiday wrap up warm in winter attire and take yourself along to Leeds Castle to blow away some cobwebs.

From Boxing Day until January 3 you'll be able to get some Kentish fresh air into your lungs and walk off the excesses of the festive season on the pantomime-themed Christmas Trail around the castle estate.

With 500 acres of beautiful parkland to explore, follow clues around the grounds to find letters which will form a well-known pantomime name or phrase.

After the trail, the oak-beamed 17th century Fairfax Hall Restaurant will be open for hot drinks to warm up, offering an excellent choice of freshly prepared dishes and spectacular views of the castle over the moat.

Leeds Castle is open throughout the Christmas period 10am to 5pm (with last admission at 3pm) except Christmas Day.

With a Key to the Castle pass, you pay once and visit all year round.

The pass costs £17.50 for adults; £15 for seniors and visitors with disabilities (carer goes free); £10 for children (under-fours free).

Tickets are valid for 12 months.

Leeds Castle is located near Maidstone, just off Junction 8 of the M20.

Grounds open at 10am daily and the castle is open from 10.30am. Last admission is 3pm and gates close at 5pm (October to March).

All aboard for great value

FAMILIES will be able to enjoy cheap days out on steam trains just after Christmas.

From Wednesday, December 29, to Monday, January 3, great days out for less are being offered on the Kent and East Sussex Railway.



With the purchase of one adult ticket for £12.50, three free child tickets are available. The promotion is perfect for families looking to enjoy quality time after the Christmas season.

Tickets include a return journey to Bodiam station on one of the railway's vintage steam or diesel trains, departing from Tenterden station at various times each day.

On board, families can enjoy the beautiful winter scenes of the surrounding Wealden countryside and Rother Valley as the trains gently puff along the 10-mile line.

The return journey takes a little under two hours, but with the Rover ticket families have the opportunity to enjoy a whole day out.

Families can browse the quaint shops of Tenterden or indulge in delicious treats in one of the cosy cafés along the High Street. A short walk from Bodiam station is the magnificent Bodiam Castle with its impressive battlements.

The railway also offers a variety of catering options on board the train including tea or coffee with a fresh pastry, a cream tea, ploughman's lunch or children's party boxes. Food is available on selected trains and must be booked.

The railway has ample free parking at Northiam and Tenterden stations.

Visitors who would like to start their journey at Bodiam can park at the castle for £2.

Details are at www.kesr.org.uk. To claim free tickets, visitors need to print a voucher from the website and present it at the booking office at the time of purchase.

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Friday 31st December: 10am - 2pm
Sunday 2nd January: 10am - 5pm
Monday 3rd January: 10am - 5pm

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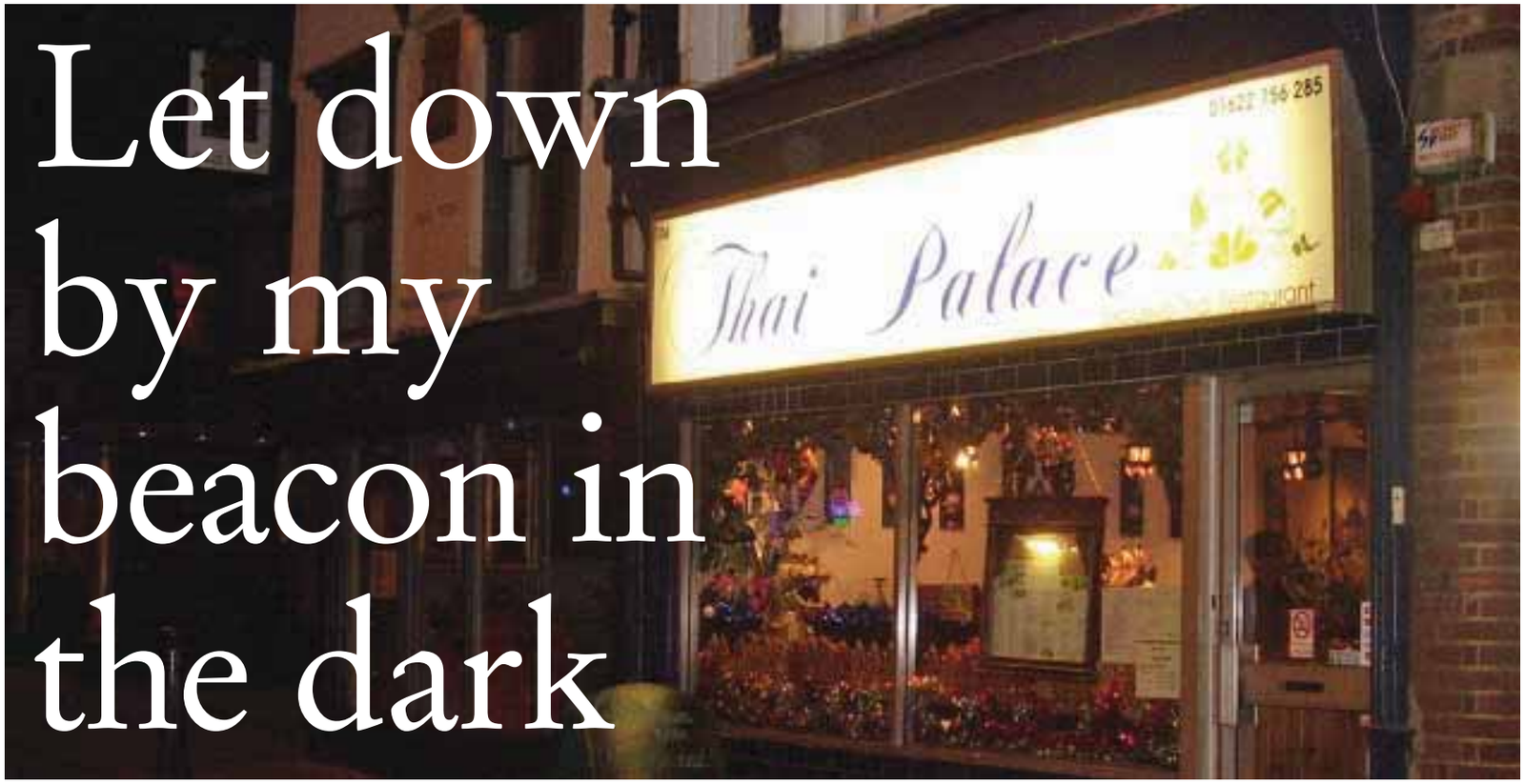
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Let down by my beacon in the dark



MY HOUSEMATE and I are newcomers to Maidstone, so a spur of the moment decision to go for a quiet meal one Sunday evening isn't as easy as it might sound.

This is made even harder when you consider that one of us is vegetarian and the other prefers to go to independent eateries, add the fact that half the restaurants in the town centre seemed to be closed for the evening and our task became even harder.

However, after several laps in the cold, we spotted the welcoming lights of the Thai Palace and all was once again well with the world. The restaurant itself was a small beacon in the dark, brightly lit by a sign across the front.

We were met at the door by a friendly waiter, who ushered us to a table, found us some menus and took our drinks orders.

I'm terribly indecisive when it comes to Thai food so I was grateful for the waiter's help discussing the heat of dishes, and appreciated his patience as I murdered the language trying to pronounce the names of the various dishes.

In the end I began my meal with tom yan goong (£4.25), a hot and sour prawn soup. With just the right balance of chilli I was very happy with my choice. If I had to criticise this dish then it would be the same old thing I always moan about with soup containing prawns – why, oh why do they leave the tails on?

I loved the soup, but getting into a mess pulling the tails off I did not enjoy. It was at this point that I realised there were no napkins and had to borrow a tissue from my guest. And so the disappointment began.

RESTAURANT REVIEW

BY **ERICA JONES**

My guest's choice wasn't quite so inspiring. The tempura pak (£3.50) was a selection of vegetables fried in tempura batter with sweet chilli sauce. She happily dived into the large portion (it could have easily served two) but was soon beaten by the excess of grease. A common problem in Oriental restaurants, she didn't mind too much as we still had a feast ahead of us.

My medium hot goong gra-prow (£6.50) or prawns, chilli and basil was okay, a little uninspiring, but poured over some steamed coconut rice (£2) it was eatable. Sadly the same couldn't be said for our other choices.

As we were sharing rice we also ordered pad thai jay (£4.95), 'a classic Thai noodle with mixed vegetables'. This followed in the footsteps of the earlier tempura in that the dominant taste was grease and I barely managed more than a couple of mouthfuls.

My housemate had opted for a favourite, green Thai curry with mixed vegetables (£4.50). Unfortunately her opinion of the dish she was presented with is probably unprintable, so I found myself trying it.

To be fair there was a bit of a kick to the sauce, and I certainly found it more interesting than my choice, but I'm pretty certain I could have done better if I'd bought a jar of something from Sainsbury's.

Unfortunately neither of us have any experience of complaining in restaurants, and the other diners around us sounded like they were enjoying their meals, so when the waiter came to check on us we both politely smiled for fear of offending him, but once I'd polished off my starter I struggled to find anything enjoyable about the food.

For £29.50 it was reasonable, but next time I'll be returning to the Medway towns for a pricier but more enjoyable Thai meal.

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Review visits and pays for meals anonymously.

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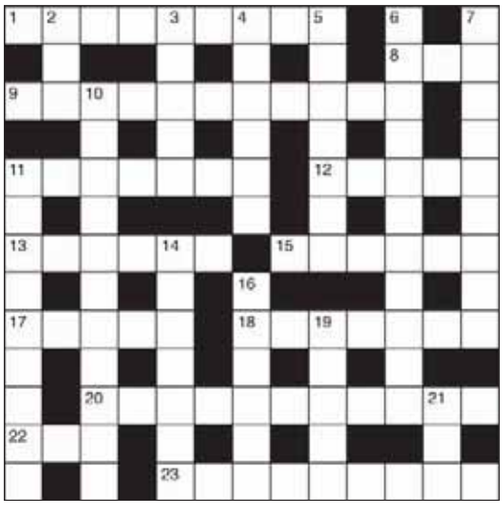
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CROSSWORD No 419

Name.....

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CRYPTIC CLUES

Across

1. Possibly proves at the finish it's the way to run short (9)
8. I will shortly be unwell (3)
9. Somehow I find it's one from a dictionary (11)
11. Tory shows diplomacy to an acquaintance (7)
12. X-rated commercial shown last month (5)
13. If a try works out, give formal consent (6)
15. Wet two enclosures (6)
17. The French journalists in Yorkshire (5)
18. Top Co. do get about and find a mollusc (7)
20. Are cheats of use in getting a good card (3,2,6)
22. The fellow returns to show agreement (3)
23. He can see a new aspect to the hill (9)

Down

2. I've gone around to compete (3)
3. Thus Ian upset the girl (5)
4. The English say, "Property" (6)
5. Three-dimensional scene showing one love in the play (7)
6. Pia's pet sure tears up delicate stuff (6,5)
7. After midnight heard it shone (9)
10. A trick in Who's Who, perhaps (4,3,4)
11. Singing girl accompanying Heather (9)
14. Ties with loud assent anyhow (7)
16. Sweet way to tee off (6)
19. The measure of crime (5)
21. Some Clint Eastwood number (3)

SCRIBBLE HERE

QUICK CLUES

Across

1. Spongy (9)
8. Mineral (3)
9. Notch (11)
11. Contend (7)
12. Regale (5)
13. Separately (6)
15. Squirm (6)
17. Change (5)
18. Conspicuous (7)
20. Electric cell (11)
22. Excluded (3)
23. Accurately (9)

Down

2. Container (3)
3. Compass (5)
4. Jubilant (6)
5. Cheat (7)
6. Happiness (11)
7. Sincere (9)
10. Prove (11)
11. Stopping (9)
14. Song-like (7)
16. Allow (6)
19. Drone (5)
21. Lubricate (3)

CRYPTIC SOLUTIONS 418: Across: 7 Ocular; 8 Palmer; 10 Collude; 11 Milky; 12 Rest; 13 Stone; 17 Cramp; 18 Tell; 22 Turin; 23 Neutron; 24 Levity; 25 Apiece. Down: 1 Concern; 2 Cutlass; 3 Magus; 4 Jasmine; 5 Ample; 6 X-rays; 9 Testimony; 14 Granite; 15 Hearses; 16 Slander; 19 Stalk; 20 Grave; 21 Mumps. **QUICK SOLUTIONS 418:** Across: 1 Absorbent; 8 Ore; 9 Indentation; 11 Compete; 12 Treat; 13 Singly; 15 Writhe; 17 Alter; 18 Evident; 20 Accumulator; 22 Out; 23 Literally. Down: 2 Bin; 3 Range; 4 Elated; 5 Twister; 6 Contentment; 7 Heartfelt; 10 Demonstrate; 11 Cessation; 14 Lyrical; 16 Permit; 19 Idler; 21 Oil.

• The winner of the last crossword (no 418) will be announced next week

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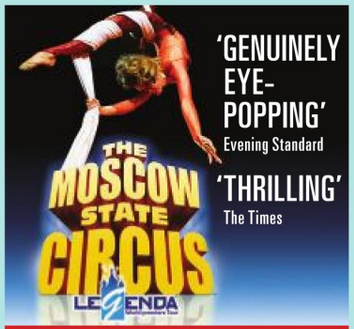
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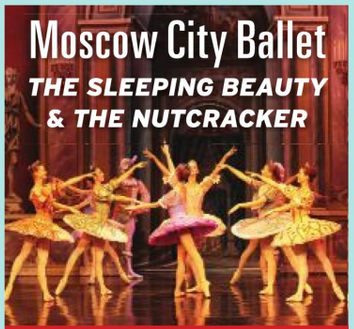
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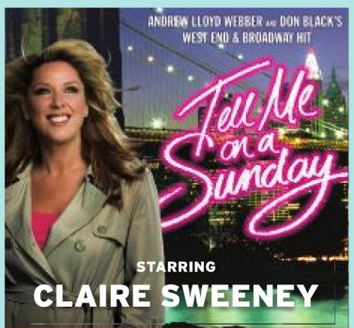
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TUE 11 - SAT 15 JAN



TUE 1 - SAT 5 FEB



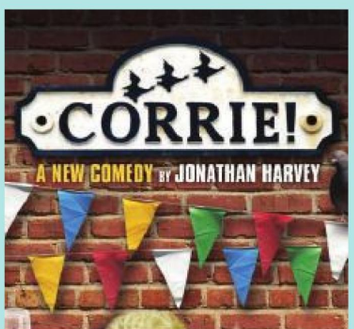
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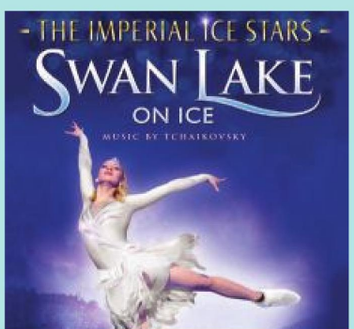
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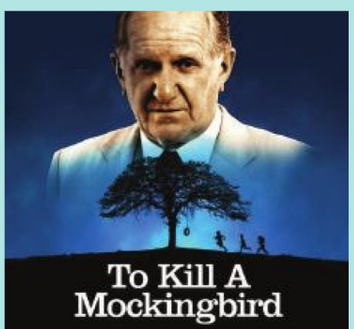
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Home is full of Christmas cheer

LET'S hope Christmas will still happen this year despite the fact Santa has put his house up for sale.

Geoff Loynes is the owner of pretty Cross Cottage in Bilsington, near Ashford, and is also one of the UK's top Father Christmases. He's had an interesting career before that too – working as an animator on some of the world's best-known cartoons.

Geoff worked on The Yellow Submarine, Watership Down, The Wind in the Willows, the BBC Beatrix Potter series and When the Wind Blows.

During his career he has met Walt Disney after his father worked at the UK studios, The Beatles – although he's not a fan – and the Jacksons, having worked on the Jackson 5 series.

He's also done tons of extra work in the film industry and has been involved with Mr Bean, Harry Enfield, Silent Witness, The Bill and EastEnders.

But Geoff's other festive career began when wife Daphne volunteered him many years ago to do a local Father Christmas gig for the playschool in Woodchurch.

It started as something of a third age career, as he has since done hundreds of Father Christmas bookings and is one of the UK's top Father Christmases.

He has been the man in the red suit at Spanish tenor Jose Carreras' birthday party and the official FC for the Comet Christmas TV campaign, including having his lifesize cut-out appear in all their stores.

Apparently the Loynes had one in their bedroom for years until Daphne put her foot down!

He has also made numerous other appearances, such as being the regular Santa for the turning-on-of-the-lights party for Marylebone High Street.

Cross Cottage itself is similarly charming. The Loynes have lent their creative and artistic flair to the refurbishment of a delightful former estate cottage in Bilsington.

There is a fascinating array of reclaimed architectural salvage, from carved fretwork and beautiful stained glass to elaborate cast-iron sanitary ware and old enamel signs. The joinery is also very appealing, with lovely old doors, shelves and fittings. Many of these will remain with the cottage once it is sold.

One of the bedrooms, currently used as a study, contains lots of cartoon and film paraphernalia too, including some of Mr Loynes' original artworks.

Geoff said: "It's just time to move on."

The three-bedroom Cross Cottage is on the market for £349,500. Call Hobbs Parker on 01233 506221 for more information.



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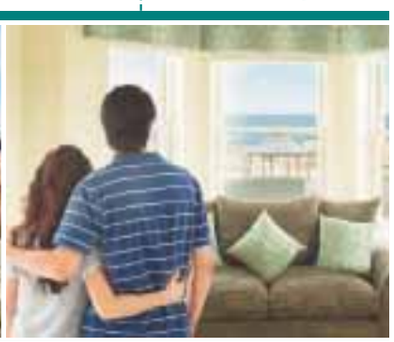
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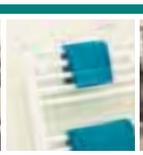
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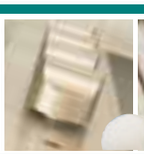














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Maidstone Branch

CONNELLS ESTATE AGENCY of the YEAR 2007 OVERALL WINNER

Connells

Maidstone From £150,000



- No Chain
- Two Bedrooms
- Garage & Driveway
- Corner Plot

Maidstone £80,000



- First Floor Studio Flat
- Allocated Parking
- No Forward Chain
- Town Centre Location

Maidstone From £200,000



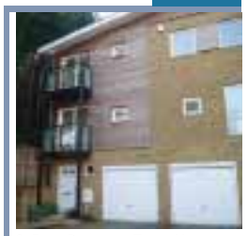
- Three Bedrooms
- Two Reception Rooms
- Cellar
- Attractive Garden

Maidstone £129,950



- Top Floor 2 Bed Apartment
- 15'4 Balcony
- Allocated Parking Space
- Open Plan Kitchen / Lounge

Maidstone £260,000



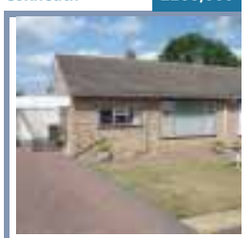
- Four Bedroom Town House
- Master with En-suite
- Downstairs Cloakroom
- Garage and Driveway

Boughton Monchelsea From £200,000



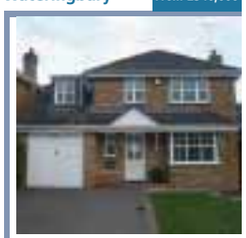
- Three Bedrooms
- Two Reception Rooms
- Cellar
- Attractive Garden

Coxheath £200,000



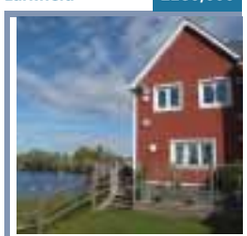
- Two Bed Semi Det Bungalow
- Garage and Parking
- Pleasant Rear Garden
- Cul De Sac Location

Wateringbury From £340,000



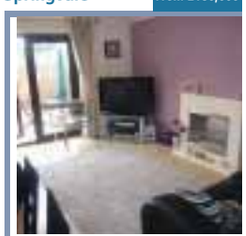
- 4 Bed Detached Home
- Master Bedroom with Ensuite
- Sought After Location
- Downstairs Cloakroom

Larkfield £280,000



- Attractive Three Bed House
- Stunning Lake Views
- Master Bedroom with Ensuite
- Two Allocated Parking Spaces

Springvale From £180,000



- Four Bedroom Town House
- Well Presented Throughout
- Communal Parking Area
- Central Location

Maidstone £129,950



- Top Floor 2 Bed Apartment
- Gated Development
- Open Plan Kitchen/lounge
- EnSuite

Maidstone £245,000



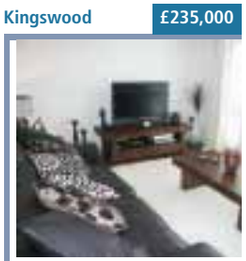
- Two/Three Bed Det House
- Well Presented Throughout
- Master Bedroom with En-suite
- Downstairs Cloakroom

Ditton From £240,000



- Modern 3 Bed Family Home
- Garage and Parking
- 8 Years NHBC
- Sought After Location

Kingswood £235,000



- Cottage' Style 3 Bed House
- Village Location
- Modern Fitted Kitchen
- Garage & Parking

Maidstone £234,995



- Extended Three Bedroom
- Semi Detached House
- Family Room
- Attractive Rear Garden

Barming £240,000



- Charming 2 Bedroom Home
- Downstairs Cloakroom
- 2 Ensuites
- Sought After Location

Maidstone From £130,000



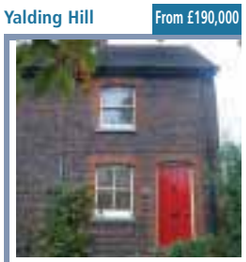
- Two Bed Mid Terrace House
- Two Reception Rooms
- Cellar
- No Forward Chain!

Maidstone From £210,000



- Three Bedrooms
- Downstairs Cloakroom
- Conservatory
- Garage & Driveway

Yalding Hill From £190,000



- 2 Bedroom Period Cottage
- Studio To The Rear Garden
- Village Location
- Under Floor Heating

Maidstone £234,995



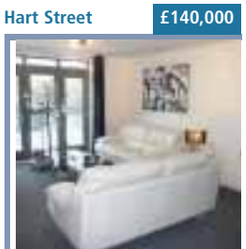
- Extended Three Bedroom
- Semi Detached House
- Two Reception Rooms
- Conservatory

Maidstone £155,000



- Semi Detached House
- Off Road Parking
- Two Bedrooms
- No Chain!

Hart Street £140,000



- Top Floor 2 Bed Apartment
- Ensuite
- Gated Development
- Central Location

East Farleigh £140,000



- Two Bedroom Park Home
- Semi Rural Location
- River Views
- Allocated Parking

Maidstone £145,000



- Two Bedrooms
- Open Plan Living Area
- Sought After Road
- No Onward Chain

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Canterbury Branch

CONNELLS ESTATE AGENCY of the YEAR 2007 OVERALL WINNER

Connells

CANTERBURY — From £195,000



- Two Bedroom Apartment
- Master Bedroom with En Suite
- Juliet Balconies
- Kitchen and Lounge

CHARTHAM — From £160,000



- Three Bedrooms
- Arranged Over Three Floors
- End of Terrace
- Village Location

CHARTHAM — From £170,000



- Two bed semi detached house
- Lounge & kitchen/diner
- Utility room
- Gardens & garage

CHARTHAM — £195,000



- Character Property
- Two Bedrooms
- View To Rear
- Off Road Parking, No Chain

CANTERBURY — From £240,000



- Two bed top floor apartment
- Spacious Accommodation
- Separate Kitchen
- High Standard of Finish

CHARTHAM — £150,000



- Two bed period cottage
- Views over fields
- Large windows
- Front & rear gardens

CANTERBURY UKC — £215,000



- Four bedroom student house
- Let for 2010/2011
- Ready made income
- No chain

CANTERBURY — £169,995



- Two bedroom apartment
- Ground floor
- Secure access
- No chain, Ideal investment

CANTERBURY — £150,000



- Two Bedrooms
- Split Level Apartment
- Open Plan Lounge / Diner
- Separate Kitchen

TYLER HILL — From £120,000



- Guide Price £120,000-£140,000
- Two Bed Ground Floor Flat
- North Side of Canterbury
- Garden, No Chain

CANTERBURY — £100,000



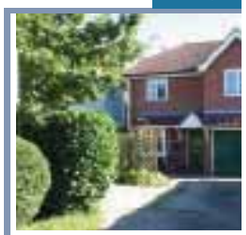
- Two Bedroom Apartment
- For The "Over 55's"
- Double Glazed Windows
- Lift and Security Entry Phone

CANTERBURY — From £225,000



- Three Bed Detached House
- Priced To Sell
- Two Receptions
- Garden & Parking

ROUGH COMMON — From £275,000



- Detached house
- Popular rough common
- Three double bedrooms
- En-suite bathroom/w.c

CANTERBURY — From £95,000



- 2 Bedroom First Floor Flat
- Lounge, Kitchen/Diner
- Double Glazed Windows
- No Chain Ahead

CANTERBURY — £230,000



- Two bed apartment
- Close proximity to city centre
- Master en-suite
- Allocated parking

CANTERBURY — £110,000



- Double Bedroom
- Modern Kitchen, Open Plan
- Shower Room
- Top Floor, No Chain

CANTERBURY — From £150,000



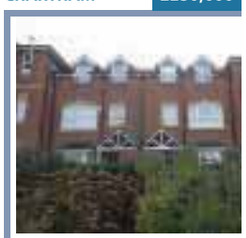
- First Floor Apartment
- Two Bedrooms
- Lounge, Kitchen
- Parking, No Chain

STURRY — £350,000



- Four Bedrooms
- New Extension, 2 Receptions
- En Suite
- Modernisation Required

CHARTHAM — £250,000



- Three Bedroom Townhouse
- Three Bathrooms
- Kitchen & Sep. Dining Room
- Parking, Pleasant Location

CANTERBURY — £175,000



- Two Bed Mid Terrace House
- No Chain
- Enclosed Rear Garden
- Open Plan Lounge / Diner

CANTERBURY — From £200,000



- Two Bedrooms
- Semi Detached Bungalow
- Garage & Parking
- Semi Rural Location

BROAD OAK RD — £280,000



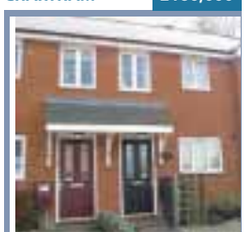
- Four/Five Bedroom House
- En Suite to Master Bedroom
- One Bedroom Annexe
- Conservatory

STOURSIDE STUDIOS — From £180,000



- One bedroom apartment
- City centre location
- Views overlooking River Stour
- Close to Canterbury West Station

CHARTHAM — £160,000



- Two Bedrooms
- Low Maintenance Rear Garden
- Gas Central Heating, D.G.
- Garage & Additional Parking

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ST MARY'S ISLAND £275,000



- Stunning Three Bedroom Family Home
- More Traditional layout.
- Possible No Forward Chain
- Modern Fitted Lounge/Diner
- Paved Garden With Various Lighting

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CHATHAM £200,000



- Two Bedroom Apartment
- Views Over The Marina
- Communal lift To All Floors
- En Suite To Master Bedroom
- Open Plan Lounge/Diner
- Presented To High Spec
- Underground Parking
- Balcony From Bedroom One

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GILLINGHAM £194,995



- Sought After Cul De Sac
- Re Fitted Kitchen/Diner
- Three Separate Bedrooms
- En Suite To Master
- Two Allocated Parking Spaces
- Gillingham/Chatham Boarders
- Neat Rear Garden

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ST MARY'S ISLAND £169,995



- 3 Bedroom Apartment
- Over Looking Medway River
- En Suite To Master Bedroom
- Allocated Parking
- Modern Fitted Kitchen
- Gas Central Heating System

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PUBLIC NOTICE

42 Caling Croft, New Ash Green, Longfield, Kent DA3 8PX

By order of the mortgagee in possession, we would advise you that an offer has been made for the above property in the sum of One Hundred & Sixty Eight Thousand Pounds (£168,000)

Any person wishing to increase on this offer should notify the selling agents of their best offer during the course of the next 7 days.

Your-Move, 53-55 Station Road, Longfield, Kent DA3 7QA
Tel: 01474 704104

PEMBURY £164,950



- Two Double Bedrooms
- Bathroom with Separate Shower
- Sitting Room
- Kitchen/Breakfast Room
- Conservatory
- Good Size Garden
- Off Road Parking

01892 520378 tunbridgewells@your-move.co.uk

TUNBRIDGE WELLS £147,500



- 2 Bed First Floor Apartment
- Built by Barratt New Home
- No Onward Chain
- Walking Distance of Station
- Good Decorative Order
- Viewings Highly Recommended

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PLOUGHMANS WAY £142,950



- Three Bedroom Mid Terrace
- Ideal for First Time Buyer
- No Chain
- Lounge Kitchen Dining Room
- Conservatory
- Front and Rear Gardens
- Garage En-Bloc
- Well Presented

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EA/8221 02/2010

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Your Move, 93 Commercial Road, Paddock Wood, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 6DS

CHATHAM £125,000



- 1930's House
- No Forward Chain
- First Floor Bathroom W.C
- Two Reception Rooms
- Garden Approx 50 Foot
- Two Double Bedrooms
- Gas Central Heating System

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PUBLIC NOTICE

18 Balmoral Road, Gillingham, Kent ME7 4PG

We advise that an offer has been made for the above property in the sum of £120,000.

Any persons wishing to increase on this offer should notify the agents of their best offer prior to exchange of contracts.

Your Move 79 Balmoral Road, Gillingham, Kent ME7 4PD
01634 852345

CHATHAM £110,000



- Fire Damaged Family Home
- Cash Buyer Only
- Within 1/4 Mile Of The Station
- Garage And Parking
- Rear Garden Approx 80 Ft
- Lounge And Reception Hall
- Three Separate Bedrooms
- First Floor Bathroom

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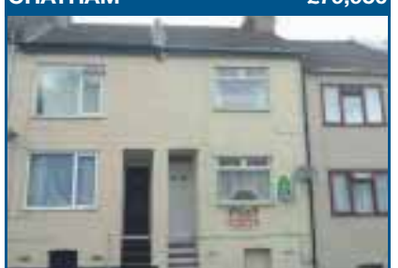
CHATHAM £100,000



- Central Chatham Location
- Within 1/2 Mile Of The Station
- Refurbished Victorian Home
- Re-Fitted Kitchen & Bathroom
- Ideal First Time Buy
- No Forward Chain
- Gas Central Heating System

01634 829491 chatham@your-move.co.uk

CHATHAM £79,950



- No Forward Chain
- Three Bedroom Home
- Ground Floor Bathroom
- Double Glazed Where Stated
- Rear Garden
- Vacant Possession

01634 829491 chatham@your-move.co.uk

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Invite to exhibition

ARTISTS and writers are invited to submit work for an upcoming exhibition at the new Turner Contemporary gallery in Margate.

The competition is open to students or staff in school or higher education, and the theme is 'nothing in the world but youth'.

Winning entries will be displayed at the gallery between September 17, 2011, and January 8, 2012.

Visit www.pageturner.org.uk for more information.



APPRENTICE: Daniel Marshall at CITB awards

Trainee decorated

A TEENAGE Diploma student has won an award for commitment to his painting and decorating course.

Daniel Marshall, 17, from Sittingbourne, was singled out for praise at an evening of celebration hosted by Thanet College and supported by CITB-ConstructionSkills.

CITB area delivery manager Debbie Brewins said: "Daniel is a keen and committed trainee and has succeeded in securing an apprenticeship with an employer.

"It isn't always easy to match interested candidates to committed employers, however. We need more firms to invest in young people."

A shining example

HADLOW College has been awarded Beacon Status by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service.

The award is granted to the highest-performing colleges or training providers rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted.

Vice principal Lynda Brown said: "This is a reflection of the hard work of staff across the college in providing an excellent learning experience for all our students."

Scheme to provide more leaders in early learning

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

A PROGRAMME that supplies young children with the best educational leaders has been given the go-ahead to recruit 15 more top graduates.

Canterbury Christ Church University received the green light to extend the New Leaders in Early Years project just weeks after the Government's poverty tsar – Frank Field – identified it as a key tool in helping to defeat child poverty.

In his report, entitled The Foundation Years – Preventing Poor Children Becoming Poor Adults, Mr Field claims that for many youngsters from disadvantaged backgrounds "life's race is effectively over" by the time they start school.

New Leaders project manager, Dr Catherine Meehan, said: "We are pleased New Leaders in Early Years has been recognised by the Field report as a programme which contributes to making a difference to children in the first years of life.

"The first intake currently enrolled is made up of people from diverse life experiences and first-degree specialisations. We are keen to find more passionate, high-calibre graduates to join the programme in February."

The Field report – which was welcomed by Prime Minister David Cameron – calls for a reform of the education system with a new focus on the first five years of a child's life.

It recognises evidence that suggests professional leadership is key to ensuring good outcomes, specifically identifying Canterbury Christ Church's New Leaders in Early Years programme.

Mr Field said he hoped the Government would build further on the scheme, adding: "Children's centres should act as centres of professional development, providing formal and informal training [mirroring teaching schools].

"In order to attract high-calibre people to these professions there also needs to be clear professional development routes, both for new and existing staff."

Animals in safe hands thanks to grant

WILDWOOD Trust conservation charity has been awarded a £150,000 grant to train 12 new trainees for the next three years.

The cash comes from the Heritage Lottery Fund's Skills for the Future programme, and will provide each trainee with a £10,000 bursary while at the Canterbury-based organisation.

A spokesman said: "Zoos, wildlife trusts and conservation organisations such as Wildwood require a wide range of skills from staff, from providing public education workshops to managing woodland and conservation areas and supporting endangered species captive breeding programmes.

"These skills are hard to obtain without on-the-job training, which is why the Skills for the Future programme has been developed.

"By the end of the three-year period Wildwood will have provided training for three trainee rangers, three trainee keepers, three conservation trainees and three trainee education officers."

The successful candidates will be expected to complete a portfolio of evidence of the skills they have learned.

The training will provide the groundwork and experience required for those considering either further academic training or joining a zoo, wildlife trust or other conservation group.

Visit www.wildwoodtrust.org for more information. The deadline for applications is January 12.





FUNDING: Grant will allow Wildwood to train new staff to care for endangered species such as the water vole



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Please call Miss Julia Carter (Home Manager) on 01303 254019 for further details or email CV to cumbriahouse@ashwoodhealthcare.co.uk
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Should you wish to discuss this role informally please contact Karl Grice or Smita Derodra on 01795 590212.

For an application form please visit our website www.kca.org.uk, email recruitment@kca.org.uk or telephone 01795 590795 and select option three. Please quote reference number 733.

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Surveying
- Following up on leads to determine if the property qualifies for the government scheme
- Taking measurements and sketching the property
- Scheduling an appointment for the customer's loft insulation
No previous experience is required as we will provide full product training through both practical and theoretical workshops. However, knowledge of construction, property development and building structures can speed up the process! Earnings are accumulated on a daily basis, and rewarded only on completed sales.
Ideal candidates will:
- Be driven to take control of their own future.
- Enjoy working with people, but be capable of working independently
To apply please send your CV and a contact number. All applicants must be at least 18 years of age and willing to spend a full day in the field observing an experienced independent surveyor before a final offer is made.
To apply/more information:
JK Marketing Services
admin@jkmarketingservices.com
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If you are currently a qualified refrigeration engineer with F-Gas certification and are looking for the opportunity to get ahead, don't delay, apply now to email: tkennedy@thermotron.com Or post to: Thermotron Industries Newton House, Winch Road, Kent Science Park Sittingbourne Kent
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Thermotron Industries
info@thermotron.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

Health & Beauty

Salon Manager

Canterbury
Salary Negotiable
Are you a busy Hair stylist? Do you want to manage a salon in Canterbury? For further details call: 07767 613094
To apply/more information:
George Antoniou
applications@jobsforkent.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

Motor Trade, Driver

MOT tester/mechanic

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Salary Negotiable
MOT tester/mechanic required for a small village garage south of Maidstone. Mon- Fri and alternate Sat. mornings. Good basic wages plus profit sharing. Ring 01622 842776
To apply/more information:
Hilltop Garage
applications@jobsforkent.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

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Tonbridge
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Please apply by either email or phone:
Phone: 01622 664999Email: maidstone.admin@thebestconnection.co.uk
To apply/more information:
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maidstone@thebestconnection.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref:

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Quoting Job Ref: KOS

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Senior B2B Sales Professionals
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We offer an excellent basic salary plus generous bonus scheme, ongoing training and career development, five weeks' annual leave, contributory pension and life assurance scheme (after qualifying period) and all the benefits of working for a large media organisation. Please apply with your CV and covering letter in the first instance to: Christine.davidson@kosmedia.co.uk or in writing to Christine Davidson ,ARCHANT KOS MEDIA, Apple Barn, Hythe Road, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SS
To apply/more information:
ARCHANT } KOS MEDIA
Christine.davidson@kosmedia.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

SENIOR SUPPORT WORKER
Required to work in a home supporting adults with learning disabilities
Experience required. 35 hours per week working 1 weekend in 3.
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For more information please call Christine or Michelle
Tel: **01795 669824**

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01227 811 804
Or email CV to tbalykova@btconnect.com


Marlowe Academy
Required for January 2011
PAT and Asset Control Assistant
Part-time 20 hours per week all year round
One year fixed term contract
Salary: Academy Pay Scale 2; Pay Band 5 pro rata
Equates to £7,291 p.a.
We require a PAT and Asset Control Assistant to join our Finance and Admin team based at The Marlowe Academy with regular attendance at The Folkestone and Spires Academies. You will be responsible for maintaining fixed asset registers for all sites in the Academy Group together with the inspection and testing of portable and fixed electrical equipment.
Closing Date: Friday 7th January 2011
Full details and an application form are available from our website: www.marloweacademy.co.uk.
Alternatively contact Marion Wigington on 01843 598550 or via email: m.wigington@spiresacademy.com
The Marlowe Academy is committed to the safeguarding of children and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced CRB check and satisfactory references. The Marlowe Academy is an equal opportunities employer.


Marlowe Academy
Required for January 2011
Office & Records Supervisor
Part-time 27.5 hours per week all year round, with possibility of increasing to full-time
One Year Fixed Term Contract
Salary: Academy Pay Scale 3; Pay Band 7 pro rata
Equates to £10,635
We require a dynamic, enthusiastic Office & Records Supervisor to join our Finance and Admin team based at The Marlowe Academy with regular attendance at The Folkestone and Spires Academies
As part of your role you will lead our Marlowe admin team and ensure the delivery of excellent customer service.
In addition you will act as primary contact for Freedom of Information requests for all group academies.
Closing Date: Friday 7th January 2011
Full details and an application form are available from our website: www.marloweacademy.co.uk.
Alternatively contact Marion Wigington on 01843 598550 or via email: m.wigington@spiresacademy.com
The Marlowe Academy is committed to the safeguarding of children and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced CRB check and satisfactory references. The Marlowe Academy is an equal opportunities employer.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Highways – District of Dover

WESTCOURT ROAD & DUMBRILL HILL, WOOTTON (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is given that because of A2 junction modification works, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Westcourt Road & Dumbrill Hill, Wootton, on or after 11 January 2011 for up to 2 weeks or until the works have been completed.

WESTCOURT ROAD, WOOTTON will be closed at the junction with A2 Dover Road for a distance of approximately 50 metres, from 11 January 2011 for up to 1 week.

The alternative route is via A2 Dover Road, Westcourt Lane and Westcourt Road.

DUMBRILL HILL, WOOTTON will be closed at the junction with A2 Dover Road for a distance of approximately 50 metres, from 18 January 2011 for up to 1 week.

The alternative route is via A2 Dover Road and Geddinge Lane.

Highways – Borough of Maidstone

HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 – SECTION 116 STOPPING UP OF LAND AT ECLIPSE PARK, OLD SITTINGBOURNE ROAD, MAIDSTONE

I AM GIVING NOTICE THAT the Kent County Council propose to make an application to the Magistrates sitting at Maidstone Magistrates Court on 8 February 2011 at 2pm for an Order under Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980 to extinguish highway rights on the grounds that they are unnecessary on land at Eclipse Park, Old Sittingbourne Road, Maidstone as shown in red on the plan on deposit.

A copy of this notice and the plan referred to are on deposit, and can be seen during normal office hours, at the main reception of Kent Highway Services at Sessions, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XQ.

If you require further information or would like to discuss this matter, please contact Network Performance of Kent Highway Services in writing at the address given below, or by telephone on 08458 247 800 (24 hour contact centre).

HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 – SECTION 116 STOPPING UP OF LAND AT QUINTON ROAD, SITTINGBOURNE, KENT

I AM GIVING NOTICE THAT the Kent County Council propose to make an application to the Magistrates sitting at Sittingbourne Magistrates Court on 7 February 2011 9:30 for an Order under Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980 to extinguish highway rights on the grounds that they are unnecessary on land at Quinton Road, Sittingbourne, Kent as shown in red on the plan on deposit.

A copy of this notice and the plan referred to are on deposit, and can be seen during normal office hours, at the main reception of Kent Highway Services at Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XX and at the offices of Swale District Council, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 3HT.

If you require further information or would like to discuss this matter, please contact Kent Highway Services either in writing at the address given below, or by telephone on 08458 247 800 (24 hour contact centre).

Highways – District of Sevenoaks

VARIOUS ROADS, CHEVENING - (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order restricting the use by vehicular traffic on Back Lane, Chevening from outside Mackerels Plain to its junction with Cold Arbor Road.

The Order will become effective on 10th January 2011, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to last 4 days. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the above restriction will be via: B2042 Cold Arbor Road, B2042 Wheatsheaf Hill and Nightingale Lane.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate carriageway patching.

SPRING HILL, PENSHURST (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Spring Hill, Penshurst from Colliersland Bridge to 20m north of Brooklands Farm Close.

The Order will become effective on 1st November 2010, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to commence 5th January 2011 and last 8 weeks. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the restriction above will be via: A264 Ashurst Road Stonecross, A264 Langton Road Langton Green, A264 Bishops Down, A264 Mount Ephram, A26 St Johns Road, A26 London Road Southborough, B2176 Bidborough Ridge Bidborough, B2176 Penshurst Road Penshurts, B2176 Rouges Hill Penshurst, B2188 Fordcombe Road Penshurst, B2188 New Road Penshurst, B2188 Saints Hill Penshurst and B2188 Spring Hill Penshurst.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate a main renewal scheme.

For further information please contact Kent Highway Services on 08458 247 800.

Highways – District of Shepway

SUSSEX ROAD & DEVON ROAD, FOLKESTONE (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is given that because of gas mains replacement, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Sussex Road and Devon Road, Folkestone, on or after 10 January 2011 for up to 11 weeks or until the works have been completed.

The dates of closure and alternative routes are as shown below.

SUSSEX ROAD will be closed from 10 January 2011 for up to 6 weeks.

The alternative routes are via Foord Road North, Devon Road and Bradstone Avenue or via Bradstone Avenue, Black Bull Road and Foord Road North

DEVON ROAD will closed from 21 February 2011 for up to 5 weeks

The alternative route is via Foord Road North, Sussex Road and Bradstone Avenue

The timings and dates of the phases are approximate guidelines, and may vary subject to weather and ground conditions.

THE OLD HIGH STREET, FOLKESTONE (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is given that because of gas mains replacement, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on The Old High Street, Folkestone, on or after 10 January 2011 for up to 9 weeks or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed between the junctions with Bayle Street and Tontine Street.

There is no alternative route. Every effort will be made to maintain access for businesses whenever it is safe to do so.

Highways – District of Swale

MILL WAY, SITTINGBOURNE (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is given that because of works to remove a high level steel gantry, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Mill Way, Sittingbourne, on or after 9 January 2011 for up to 1 night or until the works have been completed.

It is planned the road will be closed overnight between the hours of 10.30 pm and 5.00 am.

The road will be closed the junctions with Milton Road and St Paul's Street.

The alternative route is via Eurolink Way, Crown Quay Lane, St Michael's Road, (northbound via Dover Street, West Street), A2 London Road, Key Street, Sheppey Way, B2006 Staplehurst Road and B2005 St Paul's Street.

Highways – Borough of Thanet

VARIOUS ROADS, MARGATE (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is given that because of gas mains replacement, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Various Roads, Margate, on or after 10 January 2011 for a total of up to 18 weeks or until the works have been completed.

The roads affected, planned dates of closure and alternative routes are as shown below.

Dane Road, Margate will be closed between the junctions with Bath Road and Dane Hill for up to 2 weeks from the 10 January 2011. This is for trial holes to establish the method of work for the installation of a gas main.

The alternative routes are via Addington Street, Addington Road and Victoria Road or via King Street, Hawley Street, Trinity Square, Northdown Road, Wilderness Hill and Dane Road.

If the gas main can be installed using an 'open cut' method, Dane Road will then remain closed for up to a further 16 weeks from 24 January 2010 whilst the works are carried out.

Works commence at the junction with Bath Road, working westwards.

Bath Road, Margate will be closed at the junction with Dane Road from 10 January 2011 for up to 4 weeks.

The alternative route for through traffic is via Northdown Road, Wilderness Hill and Dane Road

The one-way traffic order will be suspended from Clifton Street southwards, to allow access up to the point of closure.

If it is not possible to install the gas main using the 'open cut' method, Dane Road will then be re-opened from 24 January 2011, and works would switch to King Street.

King Street, Margate would then be closed from 24 January 2011, for up to 10 weeks.

King Street will be closed between the junctions with Hawley Street and Dane Hill.

The alternative route is Addington Street, Union Crescent and Hawley Street.

The works for the section of Dane Road between Bath Road and Dane Hill would then be deferred until the summer when the demand for gas is lower.

This will be notified separately under a revised Traffic Order.

Highways – Borough of Tonbridge & Malling

(GILLETTS LANE, EAST MALLING) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Gilletts Lane either side of number 16 on or after Monday 10th January 2011 for a period of up to 5 days or until such works are completed.

The alternative route is via Chapel Street and The Rocks Road.

Southern Gas Networks apologise for any inconvenience caused by these works, which are necessary to provide a connection to a property. Should you require any further information for these works, the contact is Amy Colvin on 01689 881315.

Katherine Kerswell, Group Managing Director,
Invicta House, County Hall, Maidstone,
Kent ME14 1XQ

For further information please contact Kent Highway services on 08458 247 800 (local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways

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REVOLUTION: The Jaguar XJ is further proof of the company's modernisation

Our top cars of the year 2010

By **STEVE LOADER**

THIS year has been a watershed for motoring – the year when new technologies came of age.

Electric power and hybrids are now poised for major market penetration, helped by greater awareness of environmental issues and cars developed specifically for the fledgling power sources, such as the new Nissan Leaf.

Radical they may be though, but the new tech has yet to excite the motoring senses, which is why our top cars feature traditional as well as modern virtues:

TOP COUPE

PEUGEOT RCZ: From the moment it was previewed, through to first drive and then full road test, Peugeot's stunning new 'halo model' has never failed to impress in style and handling..

Yes, it has echoes of the Audi TT, but it's cheaper and more of a head turner thanks to its alloy roof arches and the distinctive crease to the rear of the roof.

For a sporting car, the RCZ is also quite green – a point that may be underlined in 2011 by a diesel-electric hybrid version.

TOP MPV

VAUXHALL MERIVA: People carriers must be flexible and versatile, because nobody buys them for looks or handling. However, Vauxhall's second generation Meriva ticks all the boxes and narrowly missed out on the coveted European Car of the Year Award. To underline its practicality it also has rearward opening back doors to make life easier for parents getting young children in and our of the car.

TOP FAMILY HATCH

ALFA ROMEO GIULIETTA: The cult Italian brand rarely fails to excite and pulled out all the stops for the styling of a car that also revives a famous model name.Yet while Alfa and its famous shield grille stands for speed and driver pleasure, The Giulietta has also been able to incorporate high efficiency, low emission petrol and diesel powertrains developed by its resurgent parent, Fiat.



FAMILY FAVOURITE: The Vauxhall Meriva

TOP EXECUTIVE/FAMILY CAR

VOLVO S60: The Swedish brand has talked about it before, but has really created a credible alternative to German executive models this time. With its front-wheel drive chassis, the S60 still cannot go truly head-to-head with the rear-driven BMW 3-Series and Mercedes-Benz C-Class, but realistic pricing, company car tax efficiency, quality interiors and a good blend of driver enjoyment and passenger comfort gets it on the short list with the Germans.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 58

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£4,999



03 03 VAUXHALL ASTRA
Coupe Convertible 16v, Silver, Petrol 1796cc, 5sp Manual, 70,000 miles
£3,999



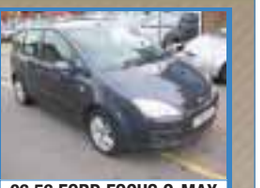
05 54 RENAULT SCENIC VVT
MPV, Norse Grey Met, Petrol 1998cc, 6-Speed Manual , 66,000 miles
£3,999



07 S SAAB 9-3 VECTOR
Anniversary TDi Convertible, 1910cc, 6 sp Manual, 41,000 miles
£11,799



05 55 LEXUS S 430
V8 Automatic Saloon, Petrol, 4293cc, 36500 Miles
£13,499



06 56 FORD FOCUS C-MAX
Zetec Auto MPV, Petrol, 1999cc, 24,500 miles
£6,499



07 07 MINI COOPER
3dr Hatchback, Petrol, 1598cc, 6 sp Manual, 25,010 miles
£9,499



08 08 HONDA CIVIC SE I-VTEC
5dr Hatchback, Petrol, 1799cc, 6 sp Manual, 32,000 miles
£8,999



04 54 MINI COOPER S
3dr Hatchback, Petrol, 1598cc, 6 sp Manual, 44,000 miles
£7,999



05 55 BMW 116I SE
5dr, Hatchback, Petrol, 1596cc, 5 speed, 58,000 miles
£7,949



05 05 VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE
8v Convertible,Petrol, 1596cc, 5 sp Manual, 35,000 miles
£6,999



03 V VAUXHALL ZAFIRA ELEGANCE
Dti 16v, MPV, Blue, Turbo Diesel 1995cc, 5-Speed Manual, 70,000 miles
£4,499



07 57 PEUGEOT 307
SW SE Automatic Estate, Petrol, 1587cc, Manual, 18,000 miles
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VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE 16V
3dr Hatchback, Petrol, 1595cc, 5sp Manual, 84,000 miles
£3,499



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GT 16v 3dr Hatchback, Petrol, 1587cc, 5 speed manual, 31,000 miles
£3,999



04 T MINI COOPER
Cabriolet, Petrol, 1598cc, 5 speed Manual, 46,000 miles
£8,490



07 07 DODGE CALIBER SXT
5dr Automatic Hatchback, Petrol, 1998cc, 39,000 miles
£5,999



01 Y SUBARU IMPREZA
GX Awd 5dr Automatic, Hatchback, Petrol, 1994cc, 52,000 miles
£3,499



04 54 TOYOTA YARIS T3 VVT-I
5dr Hatchback, Petrol, 1299cc, 5 sp Manual, 74,000 miles
£3,699



00 X RENAULT MEGANE
16v Sports Cabriolet, Petrol, 2000cc, Manual, 83,000 miles
£2,499

05 05 FORD TRANSIT 350I Motor Caravan Rimor in White, Diesel, 2400cc, 38,000 miles **£22,999**
07 57 PEUGEOT 207 GT COUPE Cabriolet, Black, Petrol, 1598cc, 5 sp Manual, 22,000 miles **£7,999**
07 B FORD FOCUS C-MAX ZETEC 125 MPV, Silver, Petrol, 1798cc, 5 sp Manual, 35,000 miles **£7,499**
04 J MINI COOPER S 3dr Hatchback, Grey, Petrol, 1598cc, 6 sp Manual, 72,000 miles **£6,999**
07 57 MAZDA 6 TAMURA 5dr Hatchback, Silver, Petrol, 1999cc, 6 sp Manual, 23,900 miles **£6,999**
06 06 FORD GALAXY GHIA TDi MPV, Aluminium Silver, 1896cc, 6 sp Manual, 70,000 miles **£6,999**
07 07 FORD FOCUS SPORT 5DR HATCHBACK, Blue, Petrol, 1798cc, 5 Sp Manual, 32,000 miles **£6,299**
06 06 MERCEDES-BENZ A170 Classic SE 5dr Hatchback, Petrol, 1699cc, 5 sp Manual, 18,000 miles **£6,299**
06 06 RENAULT MEGANE DYNAMIQUE 16V Convertible, Blue, Petrol, 1598cc, 58,000 miles **£5,999**
06 06 FORD FIESTA ZETEC CLIMATE 16V 3dr Hatchback, Blue, Petrol, 1388cc, 5sp manual, 44,000 miles **£4,999**
07 07 VAUXHALL MERIVA ENERGY 16V MPV, Blue, Petrol, 1598cc, 5 sp Manual, 18,000 miles **£4,999**
05 05 FORD TRANSIT CONNECT T200 L SWB PANEL VAN, White, Turbo Diesel, 1753cc, 5 sp manual, 75,000 miles **£4,999**
05 05 CITROEN C1 RHYTHM 5dr Hatchback, Met Grey, Petrol, 998cc, Manual, 40,000 miles **£4,299**
04 04 FORD FOCUS CL TDI 5dr Hatchback, Silver, 1753cc, 5 speed Manual, 46,000 miles **£4,299**
04 04 FORD FIESTA 16V 3dr Hatchback, Blue, Petrol, 1388cc, 5 sp Manual, 36,000 miles **£3,999**
03 03 HYUNDAI TRAJET GSI AUTOMATIC MPV, SILVER, PETROL, 1997CC, 49,000 MILES **£3,999**
06 06 HYUNDAI MATRIX GSI Automatic MPV in Silver, Petrol, 1599cc, 45,000 miles **£3,999**
03 03 HONDA CIVIC TYPE-S 5dr Hatchback, Silver, Petrol, 1998cc, 5sp manual, 81,000 miles **£3,999**
03 03 SUZUKI JIMNY JLX Estate in Silver, Petrol, 1328cc, 5 speed manual, 73,000 miles **£3,999**
05 05 DAIHATSU SIRION S 5dr Hatchback, Red, Petrol 998cc, 5 speed Manual, 75,000 miles **£3,499**
03 03 FORD MONDEO ZETEC 16V 5dr 87000 miles **£3,299**
02 02 VOLKSWAGEN BORA SPORT Saloon, Blue, Petrol, 1984cc, 5 speed Manual, 54,000 miles **£2,999**
02 52 FORD FIESTA ZETEC-S 3dr Hatchback, Silver, Petrol, 1596cc, Manual, 59,000 miles **£2,999**
02 02 VAUXHALL ASTRA ELEGANCE 16v 5dr Automatic Hatchback, Blue, Petrol, 1796cc, 49,828 Miles **£2,699**
05 54 SUZUKI ALTO L 5DR Hatchback, Silver, Petrol, 1061cc, 5 speed Manual, 35,000 miles **£2,699**
97 R TOYOTA MR2 2.0 GT 16v T Bar Coupe, Silver, Petrol, 5 sp Manual, 72,000 miles **£2,699**
03 52 NISSAN MICRA E 3DR (newshape), Silver, Petrol, 998cc, 5 speed Manual, 72,000 miles **£2,699**
03 52 FORD KA COLLECTION 3dr Hatchback, Blue, Petrol, 1299cc, 5 sp Manual, 65,000 miles **£2,499**
01 Y FORD FIESTA FREESTYLE 16V 5dr Hatchback, Green, Petrol, 1242cc, Manual, 69,000 miles **£2,199**

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Friday 24th Dec	9am to 12pm
Saturday 25th Dec	CLOSED
Sunday 26th Dec	CLOSED
Monday 27th Dec	10am to 4pm
Tuesday 28th Dec	10am to 4pm
Wednesday 29th Dec	9am to 6pm
Thursday 30th Dec	9am to 6pm
New Years Eve	9am to 2pm
New Years Day	CLOSED
Sunday 2nd Jan	10am to 4pm
Monday 3rd Jan	10am to 4pm
Tuesday 4th Jan	10am to 4pm

BACK TO NORMAL HOURS



2008 Ford Mondeo 2.0 Edge 140 Tdci
5dr, Hatchback, Black, Turbo Diesel, 6-Speed Manual
Mileage 75000



07 57 Volkswagen Transporter 1.9 TDi T28 SWB 102 BHP
1 Owner, 97,000 miles, FSH, ABS, RCL, Immob, Side Loading door, CD, Ply Lined, White



02 51 Toyota Celica 1.8 VVT-i 3dr
6sp, 82k, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, EW, CD, EM, Alloys, Met Blue



05 55 Volvo V50 2.4 SE
Semi-Auto Est, 1 owner, 59k mls, FDSH, AC, Cruise, ABS, PAS, RCL, immob, htd seats, SIPS, EW, ESR, CD, leather, alloys, Met Blue



05 05 Mitsubishi Evo 2.0 FQ-340 IX4 GSR 380 BHP
35,000 miles, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, EW, Body Kit, EM, CD, Leather, Alloys, Flame Red

ESTATES, MPV'S & 4x4'S

05 55 Volvo V50 2.4 SE Semi-Auto Est, 1 owner, 59,000 mls, FDSH, AC, Cruise, ABS, PAS, RCL, immob, htd seats, SIPS, EW, ESR, CD, leather, alloys, Met Blue £8,495

07 57 Seat Alhambra 2.0 Tdi Reference Est, 7 seats, 6sp, 1 owner, 92,000 mile, FSH, ABS, PAS, RCL, immob, EW, CD, Met Blue £7,995

08 58 Ford Focus 1.8 TD Style 5dr Est, 1 owner, FSH, a/c, ABS, PAS, r/c/locking, immob, e/w, CD, in met black £7,495

08 08 Ford Focus 1.8 TDCi Style Est, 1 owner, 64000 miles, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, EW, CD, Met Grey £6,695

07 07 Ford Focus 1.8 TDCi LX Est, 1 owner, 73,000 miles, FSH, AC, RCL, Immob, E/Htd Mirrors, CD in Tango £5,995

07 57 Mazda 6 TS 2.0D Est, 6 Spd, 1 Owner, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, Cruise, RCL, Immob, CD, Alloys, Met Black £4,995

07 07 Vauxhall Astra 1.7 CTDI Club Est, 1 Owner, FSH, AC, Cruise, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, EM, CD, Met Silver £4,495

01 51 Volkswagen Golf 2.0 SE Auto Est, 2 Owners, 83,000 miles, FSH, Climate, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, EM, Htd Seats, CD, Met Green £2,995

02 02 Alfa Romeo 156 1.6 T-Spark Turismo Est, 3 Owners, 63,000 miles, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, CD, Leather, Alloys, Met Silver £2,995

SALOONS, SPORTS & PRESTIGE

08 08 Volkswagen Passat 2.0 TDi SE 140 BHP, 6sp, 1 Owner, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, ESP, EW, EDSeat, RCL, Immob, CD, Alloys, Met Grey £8,995

05 05 BMW 320 2.0D SE 6 Speed, FSH AC, ABS, PAS, cruise, RCL, Immob, E/W, CD, Alloys, Met Grey £8,695

05 05 Vauxhall Astra 2.0 Bertone Turbo Convertible, 28,000 miles, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, Cruise, RCL, Immob, EW, Htd Seats, Alloys, Peacock Blue £6995

01 Y Subaru Impreza 2.0 WRX Turbo 4dr, 2 Owners, 75,000 miles, SH, AC, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, EW, CD, Alloys, Silver £4,995

03 03 Jaguar X-Type 2.5 V6 SE Auto 4dr, 88,000 miles, SH, AC, ABS, PAS, Cruise, RCL, Immob, EW, CD, Leather, Alloys, Met Gold £4,495

02 52 Peugeot 206 1.6 Coupe Convertible, 59,000 miles, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, ER, EW, CD, Leather, Alloys, Met Blue £4,295

HATCHBACKS

08 08 NEW SHAPE Ford Mondeo 2.0 TDCi Edge 5dr, 6sp, 1 owner, 75,000 miles FSH, a/c, ABS, PAS, cruise, r/c/locking, immob, e/w, CD, in met black £7,695

05 55 Volkswagen Golf 1.4 S 5dr, 2 owners, 58,000k, FDSH, ABS, PAS, a/c, r/c/locking, immob, e/w, CD, in blue £5,995

07 57 Vauxhall Astra 1.3 Life CDTi 5dr, 6sp, 1 Owner, 48,000 miles, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, EW, CD, Met Black ..£5,995

07 07 Ford Mondeo 2.0 LX TDCi 5dr , 1 Owner, 68,000 miles, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, Cruise, RCL, Immob, EW, CD, Met Black £4,995

03 03 Mini Cooper 1.6 S 3dr, 6sp, FDSH, AC, ABS, PAS, CBC, RCL, Immob, EW, EM, CD, 1/2 Leather, Alloys, Met Grey £5,695

07 57 Mazda 6 TS 2.0D 143 BHP, 1 owner, 96,000 miles, AC, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, EW, EM, CD, Alloys, Met Silver £5,495

07 07 Ford Mondeo 2.0 TDCi LX 5dr, 6sp, 1 Owner, 71,000 miles, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, Cruise, RCL, Immob, EW, EM, CD, Met Grey £4,995

07 57 Renault Clio 1.2 S Dynamique 16v Turbo 3dr, 1 owner, 62k, FSH, ABS, PAS, A/C, E/W, CD, Alloys in Met Blue £4,995

04 54 Volkswagen Golf 1.9 TDi SE, 2 owners, FSH, A/C, ABS, PAS, ESP, RCL, Immob, CD, Alloys in Met Silver £4,995

07 57 Ford KA 1.3 Style 3dr, 1 Owner, 37,000 miles, FSH, ABS, PAS, CL, Immob, EW, Radio/CD, Drivers Airbag, Cloth Trim, White £3,995

04 54 Vauxhall Vectra 1.8 Life 5dr , 96,000 miles, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, CBC, RCL, Immob, EW, EM, CD, Met Silver £3,495

04 54 Renault Clio 1.2 16V Extreme 3 3DR, 1 owner, 51,000 mls, FDSH, ABS, PAS, r/c/locking, immob, sunroof, CD, e/w, in silver £3,495

COMMERCIALS

08 08 Mercedes Sprinter 311 2.2 CDi LWB Dropside, 6 speed, 1 owner. 117k miles, FSH, ABS, PAS, EW, CD, in White £9,995 +vat

07 07 FORD TRANSIT 100 2.4 TDi T350 MWB S/C TIPPER, 1 owner, 75,000 miles, FS, ABS, PAS, R/C/Locking, Immob, CD in White £7995 + vat

07 57 Mercedes Sprinter 331 2.4 CDi MWB, 6 speed, 1 owner, FSH, ABS, PAS, e/w, CD, side loading dr, in white £7,695 +vat

08 57 MitsubishiL200 2.5 DI-D4 WORK, D/C, 1 owner,80,000L, FSH, ABS, PAS, c/locking, immob, CD, r/d lock, in white £7,495 +vat

07 07 Mitsubishi L200 2.5 DI-D 4 Life Double Cab, 1 owner 63,000 miles, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, CL, Immob, EW, CD, Side steps. In white £7,495 +vat

07 57 Volkswagen Transporter 1.9 TDi T28 SWB 102 BHP, 1 owner, 97,000 miles, FSH, ABS, PAS, RCL, immob, Side loading door, CD, Ply Lined, White £6,995 +vat

07 57 Mercedes Vito109 2.2 CDi Xtra Long Van, 6sp, 1 owner, 111,000 miles, FSH, ABS, PAS, r/c/locking, immob, CD, ply lined, in white £6,995 +vat

06 56 Mercedes Vito 109 2.2 CDi Compact SWB, 6sp, 2 Owneras, 64,000 miles, FSH, ABS, PAS, ASR, RCL, Immob, EW, CD, Twin Side Loading Drs, White £6,995 +vat

07 07 Ford Transit 100 2.4 TDCi T350 LWB, 1 owner, 113k, FSH, ABS, PAS, R/C/L, Immob, CD, Met Silver £5,995 +vat

07 57 Mercedes Vito 2.2 CDi 109 LWB, 3 seater, 6sp, 1 Owner, 117,000 miles, FSH, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, CD, Ply Lined, Twin side loading drs, White £6,495 +vat

07 07 Vauxhall Astra 1.9 CDTi Sportive Van, 6sp, 1 owner, 79k, FSH, A/C, ABS, PAS, R/C/L, Immob, E/W, Alloys, Met Silver £5,495 +vat

07 07 Ford Transit 85 2.2D T280 SWB, 1 Owner, 87,000 miles, FSH, PAS, RCL, Immob, 3 Seater, CD, Ply Lined, White .£5,695 +vat

07 57 Ford Transit 85 2.2D T280 SWB, 3 seater, 1 Owner, 104,000 miles, ABS, PAS, ESP, RCL, Immob, CD, Ply Lined, Side loading dr, White £5,995 +vat

07 07 Ford Transit 100 2.4D T350 LWB, Mid Roof, 3 seater, 1 owner, 117,000 miles, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, CD, Ply lined, CD, Side loading dr, White £5,995 +vat

07 57 Ford Transit 85 2.2 TDCi T280 SWB, 3 seater, 1 owner, 103,000 miles, FSH, ABS, PAS, R/C/L, Immobiliser in White .£5,995 +vat

07 07 PEUGEOT EXPERT 1.9D 815 70, 3 SEATER, 1 owner, 60,000 miles, FS, C/Locking, Immob, CD, Ply Lined in White £4,995 +vat

08 57 Volkswagen Caddy 2.0 SDi 69PS, 1 Owner, 106,000 miles, ABS, PAS, ASR, RCL, Immob, CD, Ply Lined, White ..£4,995 +vat

07 07 Vauxhall Astravan 1.7 CDTi Sportive, 6sp, 110,000 miles, FSH, A/C, ABS, PAS, R/C/L, E/W, Immobiliser, Alloys, CD in White £4,495 +vat

07 07 Vauxhall Astra 1.7 CDTi Club Van, 6sp, 1 Owner, 82,000 miles, FSH, AC, EW, PAS, Roof rack, CD, RC Locking, Immob. In White £3,995 +vat

07 07 Vauxhall Astra 1.3 CDTi Club, 1 Owner, 70,000 miles, FSH, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, EW, CD, White £3,995 +vat

07 07 Vauxhall Astravan 1.3 CDTi Club, 6sp, 1 Owner, 61,000 miles, FSH, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, EW, CD, White £3,995 +vat

07 56 Vauxhall Astravan 1.3 CDTi Club, 6sp, 1 Owner, 61,000 miles, FSH, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, CD, Ply Lined, White £3,995 +vat



Volkswagen Caddy 2.0 C20 SDi Van
Air Bag, ABS, Power Steering, Remote Central Locking, Immobiliser, CD, Cloth Upholstery, Rear Wash/wipe, Height Adjustable Seat, Side Load Door, Twin Doorway



08 08 Volkswagen Passat 2.0 TDi SE est
6 Sp, 1 Owner, 64000 miles, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, SIPS, EW, CD, Alloys, Met Silver



07 57 Ford Focus 1.8 TDCi Style 5dr
1 Owner, 47,000 miles, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, Computer, CD, Met Blue



05 55 Ford Mondeo 3.0 V6 Titanium
6sp, 2 owners, 36,000 miles, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, Cruise, RCL, Immob, EW, Auto Lights, Htd Seats, CD, Leather, Alloys, In Platinum



02 02 Alfa Romeo 1.6 T.spark Turismo Sportwagon
63000 miles, A/C, PAS, ABS, EW, CD, Alloys, Power steering, EM, service history

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2008 08 CLIO 3DR 1.2 16V FREEWAY CLOCKING SINGLE CD/RADIO 15658 MILES PACIFIC BLUE	£5,495	£4,995
2007 07 CLIO 3DR 1.2 16V RIP CURL ALLOYS CLOCKING CD PLAYERS 34869 MILES MET PEARL BLACK	£5,795	£5,595
2008 08 CLIO 3DR 1.2 16V EXPRESSION ALLOYS CD PLAYER CLOCKING 15500 MILES MET EXTREME BLUE	£6,595	£6,395
2006 06 CLIO 5DR INITIALE 1.6VVT ALLOYS CLIMATE FULL LEATHER 27000 MILES MET PEARL BLACK	£6,795	£6,495
2008 58 NEW CLIO 1.2 TCE 100 DYN 3DR 16 ALLOYS CD A/C ELEC PACK 17359 MILES EXTREME BLUE	£6,995	£6,795
2008 58 NEW CLIO 1.2 TCE 100 DYN 5DR 16 ALLOYS CD A/C ELEC PACK 30764 MILES EXTREME BLUE	£7,495	£6,995
2009 59 NEW CLIO 1.2 TCE 100 DYNAMIQUE 5DR 16 ALLOYS CD A/C ELEC PACK 13980 MILES OYSTER GREY	£8,395	£7,995
2010 60 NEW CLIO 3DR 1.2 16V EXTREME CLOCKING CD PLAYER DELIVERY MILEAGE CAPSICUM	£11,040	£7,995
2007 56 RENAULTSPORT 197 ALLOYS AIR CON CD PLAYER 26300 MILES ULTRA RED	£8,495	£7,995
2010 60 NEW CLIO 3DR 1.2 16V EXTREME CLOCKING CD PLAYER DELIVERY MILEAGE MET MERCURY	£11,445	£8,400
2010 60 NEW CLIO 3DR 1.2 16V EXTREME CLOCKING CD PLAYER DELIVERY MILEAGE MET PEARL BLACK	£11,445	£8,400
2007 56 RENAULTSPORT 197 17 ALLOYS CLIMATE CD x 6 CRUISE 24675 MILES NIMBUS GREY	£8,995	£8,495
2010 10 NEW CLIO 1.2 TCE 100 i-MUSIC 5DR ALLOYS AIR CON CLOCKING BLUETOOTH 2695 MILES METALLIC BLUE	£9,495	£8,495
2010 10 NEW CLIO 5DR 1.2TCE DYNAMIQUE AIRCON ALLOYS CLOCKING C/D PLAYER 10071 MILES MET EXTREME BLUE	£14,605	£8,995
2010 10 CLIO SPT/TR 1.5DCI 86BHP DYNAMIQUE AIRCON ALLOYS SINGLE CD PLAYER CLOCKING 8381 MILES MERCURY SILVER	£10,495	£10,195
TWINGO		
2007 57 TWINGO 3DR 1.2 TCE GT AIR CON ALLOYS CLOCKING 15320 MILES IN SILVER	£6,295	£5,495
2008 08 TWINGO 1.2 TCE 100 GT AIRCON ALLOYS CLOCKING 26557 MILES CAPSICUM RED	£6,150	£5,995
2009 09 TWINGO RENAULTSPORT 133 17 ALLOYS CUP PACK CD PLAYER 4217 MILES IN CAPSICUM RED	£9,495	£9,295
2009 59 TWINGO RENAULTSPORT 133 17 ALLOYS CUP PACK CD PLAYER 3450 MILES IN CAPSICUM RED	£10,995	£9,995
MODUS		
2007 07 MODUS 1.4 EXPRESSION 15 TRIMS AIR CON FRONT FOG LIGHTS 31896 MILES METALLIC BLACK	£5,795	£5,495
2008 08 MODUS 1.4 16V DYNAMIQUE 15 ALLOYS CD A/C ELEC PACK 13486 MILES MERCURY	£6,395	£5,795
2009 59 GRAND MODUS 1.2TCE DYNAMIQUE ALLOY AIRCON FOLDING MIRRORS 6564 MILES METALLIC STONE	£13,705	£8,495

MEGANE	WAS	NOW
2006 56 MEGANE SPT/TR 1.6VVT DYNAMIQUE AIRCON ALLOYS CLOCKING 45663 MILES METALLIC PEARL BLACK	£5,695	£4,995
2006 56 MEGANE S/TOURER 1.9 DCI 130 DYN 16 ALLOYS CD A/C ELEC PACK 34482 MILES ECLIPSE GREY	£6,495	£5,995
2007 57 MEGANE 1.6 VVT PRIVILEGE 5DR CLIMATE PART LEATHER S/ROOF ALLOYS 33300 MILES MET EXTREME BLUE	£6,495	£5,995
2007 07 MEGANE 5DR 1.6VVT AUTO DYNAMIQUE ALLOYS AIRCON C/D PLAYER CLOCKING 18110 MILES METALLIC QUARTZ	£6,295	£5,995
2008 58 MEGANE 5DR 1.6VVT DYNAMIQUE ALLOYS AIRCON CLOCKING C/D PLAYER 7846 MILES MET PEARL BLACK	£7,795	£7,495
2007 57 MEGANE 3DR REN/SPT 225 LUX ALLOYS BLACK F/LEATHER X6 MULTI PLAYER 31847 MILES ULTRA RED	£10,295	£9,495
2008 58 NEW MEGANE COUPE 1.6 16V DYNAMIQUE 16 ALLOYS CRUISE CONTROL A/C 12975 MILES OYSTER GREY	£10,295	£9,995
2009 59 NEW MEGANE 1.6 VVT i-MUSIC ALLOYS AIR CON CLOCKING BLUETOOTH 4987 MILES METALLIC RED	£10,995	£9,995
2009 09 NEW MEGANW 5DR 1.6VVT 110BHP PRIV ALLOYS CLIMATE PAN ROOF KEYLESS ENTRY 8300 MILES MERCURY SILVER	£11,295	£10,995
2008 08 MEGANE REN/SPT 225 BLACK ALLOYS BLACK LEATHER CLIMATE 19300 MILES DEEP BLACK	£11,395	£11,295
2010 10 NEW MEGANE 5DR 1.6VVT DYNAMIQUE ALLOYS AIRCON KEYLESS C/D PLAYER 10 MILES MET EXTREME BLUE	£17,960	£11,995
2010 10 NEW MEGANE 5DR 1.5 DCI 106BHP DYN ALLOYS AIRCON KEYLESS ENTRY SAT NAV TOMTOM 1635 MILES OYSTER GREY	£12,495	£12,295
2010 10 NEW MEGANE COUPE 2.0 DCI 160 GT 18 ALLOYS 1/2 LEATHER CD CLIMATE 10500 MILES MALTA BLUE	£24,840	£17,995
2009 59 NEW MEGANE COUPE RS 250 19 ALLOYS GLASS ROOF FULL GREY LEATHER 12231 MILES MET OYSTER	£20,995	£20,795
SCENIC		
2007 07 SCENIC 1.6VVT DYNAMIQUE 16 ALLOYS CD A/C ELEC PACK 17330 MILES ICE BLUE	£6,395	£5,995
2007 57 SCENIC 5DR 1.6VVT DYNAMIQUE ALLOYS AIRCON C/D PLAYER CLOCKING 27207 MILES MET TOPAZ GREY	£6,295	£5,995
2007 57 SCENIC 1.6VVT DYNAMIQUE A/C CD 16 ALLOYS CRUISE CONTROL 12903 MILES QUARTZ	£6,695	£6,495
2007 57 SCENIC 1.6 VVT DYNAMIQUE 16 ALLOYS CD A/C ELEC PACK 11150 MILES ICE BLUE	£6,895	£6,695
2007 07 SCENIC 5DR 1.6VVT DYNAMIQUE ALLOYS AIRCON C/D PLAYER CLOCKING 20224 MILES MET MERCURY	£6,795	£6,495
2007 07 GRAND SCENIC 2.0 DYNAMIQUE AUTO 7 SEATS A/C 16 ALLOYS CD ELEC PACK 21365 MILES ICE BLUE	£7,695	£6,995
2007 07 GRAND SCENIC 2.0 DYNAMIQUE AUTO AIR CON 7 SEATS CD ELEC PACK PAS CLOCKING 27743 MILES ICE BLUE	£8,495	£6,995
2007 57 SCENIC 5DR 1.6VVT DYNAMIQUE'S' ALLOYS CLIMATE H/LEATHER CLOCKING 14198 MILES MET JAVA GREEN	£7,195	£5,995
2009 59 NEW SCENIC 5DR 1.6VVT EXPRESSION AIRCON CD PLAYER CLOCKING 16729 MILES METALLIC OPAL BLUE	£16,520	£9,995
2009 59 NEW GRAND SCENIC 1.5 DCI 106 DYN 16 ALLOYS CD A/C HANDS FREE LOCKING 13268 MILES PEARL BLACK	£12,995	£12,495
2009 09 NEW GRAND SCENIC 1.5 106 EXPRESSION AIR CON ELEC PACK 7 SEATS ESP 6262 MILES IN BLUE MET	£12,795	£12,495
2009 59 NEW GRAND SCENIC 1.5 DCI 106 DYN 16 ALLOYS CD A/C HANDS FREE LOCKING 4067 MILES PEARL BLACK	£13,795	£12,795
2010 10 NEW GRAND SCENIC TCE 130 TOMTOM 16 ALLOYS CD AIR CON HANDS FREE LOCKING 7010 MILES EXTREME BLUE	£13,295	£12,895
2009 59 NEW GRAND SCENIC 1.9 DCI 130 DYN 16 ALLOYS CD A/C 7 SEATS C/C HANDS FREE 10693 MILES MERCURY	£13,495	£12,895
2010 10 NEW SCENIC 1.5 DCI DYN TOM TOM 16 ALLOYS SAT NAV HANDS FREE LOCKING 8084 MILES OYSTER GREY	£13,895	£13,295
LAGUNA		
2008 57 LAGUNA 2.0 DCI INITIALE AUTO 5DR SAT NAV GREY LEATHER 16 ALLOYS CD 16500 MILES MERCURY	£12,895	£11,795
CABRIOLET		
2008 08 MEGANE CC 1.6 VVT DYNAMIQUE AIR CON 16 ALLOYS CLOCKING 26253 MILES MET QUARTZ	£9,995	£9,495
OTHER MAKES		
2006 06 CITROEN C4 CACHET 5DR 17 ALLOYS CD A/C GLASS ROOF 29880 MILES SILVER	£6,495	£5,995

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Cars of the year 2010

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 54

TOP SUPERMINI

SUZUKI SWIFT: The all-new version arrived just a few weeks ago, looking like a slightly bigger version of the old car. Don't be fooled; this is vast improvement inside and out and on the road over what was already one of the best bargains in the supermini sector. Two generations ago, the Swift hardly lived up to its name; with its own distinctive styling, nimble handling and great practicality it's really flying now.

TOP DIRECTOR'S CAR

JAGUAR XJ: Jaguar has undergone a revolution in just a few years. The old 'trad Jag' styling has gone and the bravery that once made the brand great is now back. The mid-range XF started the process and the gorgeous XJ consolidated it. With its all aluminium body and a frugal yet powerful diesel option, it's also no gas guzzler for plutocrats.

TOP CITY CAR

TOYOTA IQ: Toyota's baby deserves to sell in bigger numbers; being able to seat four at a pinch, it's easily a better proposition that the older two-seat only Smart city car, which obviously inspired the Toyota's model name.

However, the world's biggest carmaker decided that its smallest model should command a premium price and come with a premium spec – it's worth it though.

TOP ECO CAR

VW GOLF BLUE MOTION: Electric power's imminent arrival and the green image of hybrids like the Toyota Prius may grab headlines, but the most practical of a new greener breed of cars are low-emission diesels. The Golf version is by far the best as it is based on what is probably the best all-round hatchback model on the market. The latest generation Golf won't draw the eye like the Alfa mentioned earlier, but is easily the most refined in class and the BlueMotion still delivers enough driving pleasure – you can go green with a grin.



ECO LEADER: The Volkswagen Golf Bue Motion is the best of the new breed of green cars



HEAD TURNER: The Peugeot RCZ


COMPACT: The Toyota IQ


BRAND REVIVAL: The Alfa Romeo Giullietta



CITY SLICKER: The new Suzuki Swift



REASONABLY PRICED: The Volvo S60



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CRÉATIVE TECHNOLOGIE

CITROËN

Official Government Fuel Consumption Figures: Urban Cycle, Extra Urban, Combined (litres per 100km/mpg) & CO_2 emissions (g/km): Highest: New Citroën DS3 1.6 VTi 120hp Auto 9.6/29.4 5.3/53.3 6.9/40.9, 158. Lowest: New Citroën DS3 1.6HDi 90hp 99g 4.7/60.1, 3.3/85.6, 3.8/74.3, 99.

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Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km). Vauxhall range: Urban: 16.5 (17.1) – 61.4 (4.6), Extra-urban: 32.8 (8.6) – 88.3 (3.2), Combined: 24.2 (11.7) – 76.3 (3.7). CO_2emissions: 274 – 98g/km.

20% saving applies to list price only and excludes options, delivery and other charges. Offer applies to selected retailer stocks at participating retailers only for vehicles registered between 27.12.10 and 31.01.11. Offer cannot be combined with any other offer, except GM Card. Vauxhall Lifetime Warranty covers lifetime ownership of first registered keeper, 100,000 mile limit. Offer available to all Vauxhall passenger cars (this offer does not apply to car derived vans). Terms and conditions apply. (Vaux105315)

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AGILA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2009	09	Agila Design CDTi	1.3D	5	Atlantis blue	9,350	8,995

ASTRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2006	06	Astra Active Estate	1.6	5	Silver lightening	18,950	5,995
2006	06	Astra Active	1.6	5	Ultra blue	37,000	5,995
2006	56	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Metro blue	25,000	6,795
2006	56	Astra Active	1.6	5	Star silver	26,990	6,295
2007	08	Astra Sri X Pack	1.6TBO	3	Black sapphire	45,600	8,350
2008	08	Astra Sri X Pack	1.8	5	Silver lightening	15,870	8,495
2008	58	Astra Elite	1.6	5	Star silver	13,775	8,495
2008	09	Astra Sxi Sports hatch	1.4	3	Red	16,810	8,995
2009	09	Astra Breeze CDTi	1.7D	5	Silver lightening	8,875	9,995
2009	59	Astra Sports Twin top	1.8	2	Air blue	3,320	14,995
2009	59	Astra Active Sports hatch	1.4	3	Sovereign silver	8,040	9,995
2010	59	Astra VXR	2.0	3	Arden blue	5,660	16,995
2010	10	Astra Active	1.6	5	Star silver	5,010	11,495
2010	10	Astra Sri X Pack	1.8	3	Black sapphire	3,490	13,995
2010	10	Astra Sri CDTi	2.0	5	Black sapphire	3,330	18,995
2010	10	New Astra Sri CDTi	1.7D	5	Power red	4,880	15,995
2010	10	Astra Exclusive Auto	1.6	5	Silver lake	1,100	14,995
2010	10	New Astra Exclusive	1.4	5	Iceberg blue	3,000	12,995
2010	10	Astra Sport Sports hatch	1.4	3	Power red	2,065	11,995
2010	10	New Astra Exclusive	1.6	5	Technical grey	1,790	13,995
2010	10	New Astra Exclusive	1.6	5	Black sapphire	2,210	13,995
2010	10	Astra Exclusive	1.6	5	Sovereign silver	Delivery	14,995

CORSA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2007	07	Corsa Club	1.4	5	Star silver	17,050	6,850
2007	07	Corsa Life A/c	1.0	3	Flame red	42,500	5,395
2007	07	Corsa Life A/c	1.0	3	Flame red	44,500	5,395
2007	57	Corsa Design	1.2	3	Flame red	49,370	6,495
2008	08	Corsa Design	1.4	5	Star silver	15,575	6,875
2008	08	Corsa Breeze Plus	1.2	3	Silver lightening	16,900	7,495
2008	08	Corsa Breeze CDTi	1.3	3	Star silver	24,590	7,995
2008	08	Corsa Breeze CDTi	1.3	5	Flame red	41,275	7,295
2009	59	Corsa Sxi A/c	1.4	3	Silver lightening	800	9,495
2009	59	Corsa Active	1.0	3	Flame red	4,000	7,995
2009	59	Corsa Sxi A/c	1.2	3	Metro blue	5,990	8,995
2009	59	Corsa Active	1.2	3	Star silver	7,180	8,995
2010	59	Corsa Active CDTi	1.3D	3	Star silver	7,750	9,495
2010	10	Corsa Active CDTi	1.3D	5	Black sapphire	4,925	10,495
2010	10	Corsa Energy	1.2	3	Black sapphire	2,340	9,995
2010	10	Corsa Energy	1.2	3	Silver lightening	2,045	8,995
2010	10	Corsa Energy CDTi	1.3	3	Glacier white	2,800	10,995
2010	10	Corsa Energy	1.2	5	Metro blue	2,925	9,995
2010	10	Corsa SE	1.4	5	Beach green	4,740	10,995
2010	10	Corsa Celebrity	1.2	3	Flame red	Delivery	8,995
2010	10	Corsa Celebrity	1.2	3	Star silver	Delivery	9,495
2010	10	Corsa Celebrity	1.2	3	Star silver	Delivery	9,495
2010	10	Corsa Celebrity	1.2	3	Metro blue	Delivery	9,495
2010	10	Corsa Energy	1.2	3	Silver lake	Delivery	9,495

INSIGNIA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2009	09	Insignia Exclusive Plus Pack	1.8	5	Sovereign silver	11,400	11,995
2010	10	Insignia Exclusive CDTi	2.0	5	Star silver	6,395	15,495
2010	10	Insignia Exclusive CDTi	2.0	5	Black sapphire	10,180	14,995

MERIVA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2006	06	Meriva Design	1.4	5	Silver lightening	43,700	5,575
2007	57	Meriva Energy	1.4	5	Star silver	31,100	6,495
2008	58	Meriva Design X pack	1.8	5	Air blue	7,600	8,795

VECTRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2007	07	Vectra Design	1.8	5	Star silver	26,180	7,295

ZAFIRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2009	59	Zafira Active Plus	1.8	5	Ultra blue	5,670	13,495
2010	10	Zafira Energy	1.8	5	Sovereign silver	1,570	13,995
2010	10	Zafira Sri CDTi X Pack	1.9D	5	Black sapphire	5,225	17,995
2010	10	Zafira Energy	1.8	5	Black sapphire	4,325	13,995
2010	10	Zafira Life A/c	1.6	5	Ultra blue	4,690	12,995
2010	10	Zafira Energy CDTi	1.7D	5	Star silver	2,390	14,995

ANTARA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2008	58	Antara SE Auto CDTi	2.0	5	Black sapphire	36,690	15,495

DUE SOON

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2007	07	Corsa Design Auto	1.4	3	Black sapphire	23,000	6,495
2006	06	Meriva Design CDTi	1.7D	5	Star silver	28,000	5,995
2007	57	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Metro blue	13,075	6,695
2007	57	Astra Elite	1.8	5	Star silver	19,000	7,495
2008	08	Astra Breeze	1.4	5	Ultra blue	34,000	7,495

COMMERCIAL

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2010	10	Combo CDTi	1.3	5	White	17,005	7,995
2010	10	Combo van	1.2	5	Glacier white	Delivery	8,995+VAT
2010	10	Astravan Sportive CDTi	1.7D	3	Sovereign silver	Delivery	10,995+VAT
2010	10	Vivaro LWB	2.0	5	Glacier white	7,350	11,995+VAT

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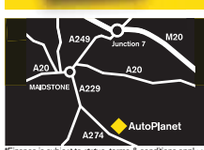


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09 FORD FOCUS DIESEL HATCHBACK 1.6 TDCI TITANIUM 5DR [110] [DPF] (2008 -) 18164 MILES	£11999	£10499	£1500
08 FORD FOCUS 2.5 ST-3 3DR 0 MILES	£13999	£13299	£700
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09 FORD FOCUS HATCHBACK 1.6 ZETEC 5DR (2008 -) 15610 MILES	£8799	£7799	£1000
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53 VAUXHALL VECTRA 1.8I LS 5DR	£4499	£3499	£1000
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56 CITROEN C1 1.0I RHYTHM 3DR	£5999	£5199	£800
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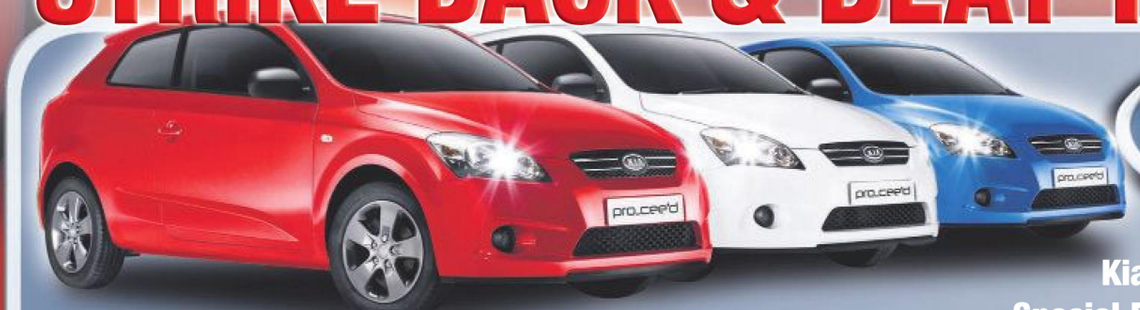
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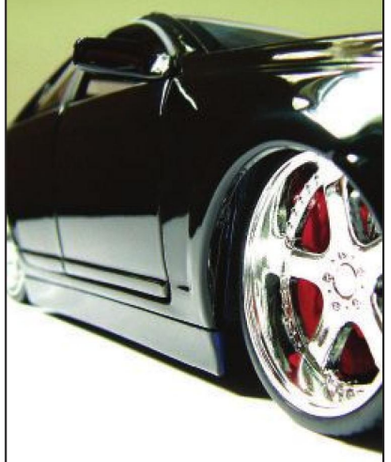
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INSIDE THIS WEEK



MY motoring alter ego has its say with news of an award for a 4x4 powertrain produced in Kent for the Transit van – just the job for this weather. And I've gone into rant mode over bad driving in freezing conditions and how it underlines the failings of Mondeo Man – the company car driver who costs his employer and puts everyone at risk.

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Growth sustainable but staying modest says CBI

ECONOMIC growth in Kent during 2011 will continue to be slow, but it is sustainable according to the CBI.

And the voice of UK business was also confident enough to dismiss fears of a double dip recession and forecast healthy export growth.

Instead, the CBI – Confederation of British Industry – forecasts growth of two per cent in 2011, with 2.4 per cent the year after.

However, it warned that the first quarter of 2011 might be sluggish, with a glacial 0.2 per cent quarter-on-quarter rise. This pessimism is based largely on consumer spending falling away slightly in response to January's VAT rise from 17.5 per cent to 20.

The CBI also expects inflation to be higher than previously forecast, largely due to pressure from energy and commodity prices, and predicted this would trigger a return to normal monetary policy by the Bank of England and prompt a gradual rise in interest rates from spring 2011 to mid-2012.

CBI spokesman Ian McCafferty said: "The pace of recovery in the economy has been slightly stronger over the past year than we and many others had expected, and somewhat faster than typical during the first year out of recession. But we do not expect that rapid pace of growth to continue over the next two years of recovery."

The effects of lower public spending were already being felt in the UK, he said.

"What is striking is how little we see growth accelerating in 2012. Typically, by the third year of a recovery, growth would be more robust than we expect for either 2011 or 2012. Growth prospects for consumer spending look pretty subdued over the next couple of years. Real take-home pay will be hit further next year, unemployment is not expected to fall very quickly in 2012, and households will most likely face higher mortgage interest rates.

"The persistent strength of energy and commodity prices is a growing concern, as it is likely to mean inflation does not fall back quite as sharply as many hope. This makes it more likely that the Bank of England will need to start pulling back from record low interest rates earlier, rather than later, next year."

More positively, he said, business investment which plummeted during the recession had started to recover. Growth of seven per cent was forecast for 2011 and 8.5 in 2012, although this will still be lower than in 2008.

And the 'export, export' mantra heard across industry is expected to grow UK exports next year by nearly seven per cent and eight per cent in 2012, boosted by a favourable exchange rate and sustained growth in international markets.



EXPORTS: Healthy results are expected as the UK benefits from favourable Sterling exchange rates and international growth

Skills crunch shackles firms, say directors

NEARLY 60 per cent of Kent businesses may be suffering a skills shortage in the employment pool and in their companies.

The shock verdict in a skills survey by the Institute of Directors (IoD) comes at a time of rising unemployment and as the county and UK economies start to regain momentum.

The IoD has urged the Government to respond by scaling back business taxes and employment regulation, including the misguided 'Time to Train' policy, so firms have more resources to invest in training.

Miles Templeman, IoD director general and also chairman of Faversham-based brewer Shepherd Neame, said: "It is disturbing that at a time of economic weakness, the growth of the private sector is being held back by skills shortages.

"Businesses want to invest in training and are doing so on a large scale already, but they would invest even more if the Government took some radical steps to deliver a better overall business environment. Excessive employment regulation and an uncompetitive tax system eat up resources that businesses could use to fund training.

"The Government needs to put more emphasis on sorting out these problems if it wants to tackle skills shortages. The biggest barrier to greater employer investment in training is a lack of resource, not a lack of law."

Other key findings from the survey were:

- 31 per cent of employers are struggling to fill vacancies.
- 74 per cent of those with hard-to-fill vacancies blamed a lack of candidates with appropriate skills, qualifications or experience. Hardest to source have been technical skills, management and leadership skills, and customer service skills.
- 47 per cent of directors surveyed said some of their organisation's employees lacked the skills needed to do their job to the required level.
- 58 per cent reported that skills gaps were holding back growth through higher operational costs, compromised quality, lost orders, stifled innovation and increased workloads for other employees.

Incentive to keep UK inventive



James Speck

GOVERNMENT plans to ease corporate tax on profits generated by British research and development have been welcomed by Kent Science Park.

The idea of such a 'patent box' was first floated by Alistair Darling in 2009 and is set to be a cornerstone of George Osborne's plans to stimulate growth within the UK's hi-tech sector.

Details are still to be hammered out, but the Government has confirmed it will introduce a modest 10 per cent corporate tax for all profits arising from patents from 2013.

The announcement has already been credited with convincing pharmaceutical giants GlaxoSmithKline and AstraZeneca to invest in the UK, and Kent Science Park at Sittingourne – a hothouse of hi-tech industry in the county – was also inspired. Director James Speck said: "This is exactly the kind of measure that will encourage innovative, home-grown businesses to invest and we applaud the Government for recognising the key role this investment has to play in cementing the UK's position as a world leader in these sectors. We know from the autumn review that public spending on science won't be increasing for at least four years. While we were delighted that science escaped the worst cuts, many of our European competitors are actively increasing their spending and so it is particularly important the Government does as much as possible to ensure the UK remains the most attractive place for our homegrown companies to carry out R&D.

"Kent Science Park has the facilities, infrastructure and transport links necessary to support R&D and we are confident we will see an increase in the cutting-edge work being carried out here as these incentives encourage more companies to locate their research in the UK."

Comment

PLEASE don't tell me you are surprised by Mondeo Man becoming 10 per cent more accident prone this year (see report on this page).

Nothing finds out bad motorists faster than the challenging conditions we've had over the past week and, with the motoring hat on that I wear elsewhere in this newspaper, I have been ever more shocked at how fast some people have been driving.

My own village was particularly treacherous the other day, with snow falling on hard-packed ice, and I slowed right down to maintain traction and sensible braking distance only to see Mrs MPV sprinting up behind me to inspect my number plate as closely as possible. She obviously thought the freezing conditions allowed a dramatically shorter braking distance than that normally recommended by the Highway Code.

And don't get me started on 4x4 drivers, who mostly believe all-wheel traction also multiplies braking ability and immunity from a four-wheel skid – a dangerous mindset when many 4x4s weigh twice that of a young family's supermini which might be on the receiving end.

Sadly, it is also those in newer and presumably company-financed vehicles who seem most manic and, as the Lex Autolease report suggests, they have least to lose – but at the expense of their companies.

In many ways, Government policy to tax company car 'user-choosers' more in recent years has been counter-productive in terms of safety because it is usually the conscientious who have reverted to private car ownership.

Those who retain their company wagon are, in my experience, those more wedded to a gung-ho driving attitude that would be unsustainable if they had to pay insurance premiums that were bound to escalate, along with the cost of wearing out brakes and tyres more regularly.

Indeed, I know some believe the tax 'burden' they pay justifies their recklessness.So it would be nice to see some Kent firms calling time on their worst drivers as part of a justifiable New Year's cost-cutting resolution.

And the rest of us could heave a sigh of relief.

STEVE LOADER, BUSINESS EDITOR

MP Green's Ardo visit

FROZEN food supplier Ardo UK has been visited by its local MP after a £15 million investment in new machinery and buildings at its Charing premises.

Damian Green, MP for Ashford and minister for immigration, was welcomed onsite by operations director Jim Everest and marketing and innovation director Simon Baxter.

The Belgian-owned firm sealed its investment with a multi-million-pound deal earlier this year to buy peas from East Anglian farmers, to process and package in Kent.

Mr Everest said: "Ardo UK is a significant local employer and we were pleased to welcome Mr Green and bring him up to date with the latest developments.

"The past year has been busy for Ardo and has seen a number of key initiatives. Most visible was the completion and opening of our factory extension, giving us the most modern frozen fruit and vegetable processing and packing plant in the UK.

"And more recently, we were pleased to sign a deal with Anglian Pea Growers, a farmers' cooperative, to take next year's 14,800 tonne crop."

Mr Green said: "It's great to see a company that chose to move to the area flourish and grow. Ardo provides local employment as it extends its business, as well as backing British farmers. The whole operation is really impressive."



PEAS ON EARTH: Damian Green with Jim Everest at Ardo UK in Charing

Mondeo Man's fines rise

BUSINESS drivers are committing more driving offences year on year and costing their companies dear, according to company car supplier Lex Autolease.

After sampling 130,000 'Mondeo Man' vehicle/driver records, Lex found that driving-related fines surged by 10 per cent over the past year, with an average of 110 offences reported to Lex Autolease every day.

Almost a third (31 per cent) of company car and van drivers have committed a driving offence in the last 12 months with a third (32 per cent) of those being hit with a speeding fine. And four out of 10 (39.9 per cent) offenders have committed a parking offence, while the biggest individual increase was for unpaid congestion charges. One in 14 business drivers, or seven per cent, failed to pre-pay before entering central London.

Spokesman Steve Osborne said: "Lex Autolease argues the main increase in offences is driver related, yet it is the business community that often counts the cost either by not passing on the fines, or suffering from downtime incurred by the employee and/or the vehicle.

"It's hard to quantify how large that total cost may be, but clearly it's significant and unnecessary at a time when businesses are looking to pare back on expenses.

"These are costs that British businesses should really be getting under control and tackled through better employee and fleet management.

"Driver education is crucial and companies need to invest in these areas to minimise costs, accident rates and downtime."

Lex Autolease has compiled a list of 'high-risk' driver characteristics to identify and prioritise for training:

- High business mileage (20,000+ per annum)
- Long working hours/shift working
- Employee using private vehicles for business
- Performance or sports cars
- Driver under 21 years of age
- Full licence held less than two years
- Foreign nationals with little experience of driving in UK
- Staff with poor accident/claims histories



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HADLOW College has gained elite 'Beacon' status from the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS).

The award is granted only to the highest performing colleges or training providers; only 179 out of 4,500 educational institutions have earned it over the last 10 years and just 15 this year, when Hadlow also gained 'Outstanding' status from education watchdog Ofsted.

Beacon status enables Hadlow to share good practice across the educational sector and to lobby at senior level for government funding on behalf of the college and the land-based sector. College vice-principal Lynda Brown said the latest award was: "A reflection of the commitment and hard work of staff across the college in providing an excellent learning experience for all our students. We look forward to working within the sector to share this expertise and further develop our own good practice."

SOFT fruit grower Paul Kelsey is to become the new chairman of Kent-based Berry Gardens, the UK's leading berry and stone fruit production and marketing group.

Berry Gardens had sales of £183 million last year and holds 40 per cent of the UK market. Mr Kelsey, a specialist berry grower who farms at Kelsey Farms in Wickhambreaux, near Canterbury, will take over in January from Marion Regan of Hugh Lowe Farms at Mereworth, near Tonbridge.

He said: "Berry Gardens is one of the UK's most successful and longest-established farmer-controlled businesses and offers cost-effective and wide-scale access to the best retail customers. Our cooperative ownership means that growers can rely on top-class service from a financially secure business that they can trust."

RURAL business voice the Country Land and Business Association (CLA) has welcomed a Government pledge to review rural planning policy.

Calling the current system "not fit for purpose", CLA regional director Rupert Ashby called for revision that allowed for genuine long-term vision.

"The proposed reforms must support and provide for the economic, social and environmental pillars essential to sustainable development in the countryside," he said.

"A sustainable and thriving rural economy has businesses that help to produce long-term opportunities for growth, job creation and the delivery of affordable rural housing, which in turn brings more money to support landscape, biodiversity and food production. Radical proposals for neighbourhood planning seem to assume that economic growth and housing delivery will just happen if communities are given the opportunity to make decisions for themselves."

AN £800,000 contract to design and install the mechanical services for a new multi-million-pound care home, Valley Lodge in Gravesend, has been won by Birmingham-based JS Wright.

The 56-apartment home has been designed to use environmentally-friendly systems so JS Wright will fit energy-saving combined heat and power boilers, solar-powered hot and cold water distribution, rainwater harvesting and other features.

Work is due to start next month and complete in July, with residents moving in by September, 2011.

THREE companies have been shortlisted by Kent County Council for the contract to maintain its highway network of more than 5,000 miles of roads from September, next year. They are Colas, Enterprise and May Gurney, and the winner will be awarded the 10-year contract in June. Current contractor Ringway continues until August 31, 2011.

4x4 delivers What Van? accolade to MJ Allen



DRIVEN: Countrytrac's AWD variant of the Transit is popular across Europe

ENGINEERING group MJ Allen has celebrated a major win in the prestigious What Van? Awards.

By **STEVE LOADER**
steve.loader@kosmedia.co.uk

One of the Kent group's companies, Countytrac at Ashford, produces an all-wheel drive version of the market leading Ford Transit panel van that drove off with the What Van? Best 4x4 van award.

Known as the Transit AWD (all-wheel drive), it was highly praised by What Van? editor Paul Barker along with the Transit minibus variant that won its own category.



TIM ALLEN

Mr Barker said: "Both are excellent variants that make it easier for users to go about their business as efficiently as possible and deserve their success."

Group MD Tim Allen was delighted with the Transit AWD's win, which has more than justified a speculative venture by his group a few years ago.

He said: "We took the idea to Ford. They liked it and while they didn't fund it, they gave us a lot of technical support and the 'big brother' backing if the patent – which we share – was to be infringed, and we get a good chunk of regular business and can still sell a variation of the product elsewhere if we wish.

"We are working on the next generation, which uses a new engine with lower emissions – that should be available in 2012.

"Inquiries are up now though due to the weather. It's a bit of a cliché, but when things get slippery, sales of the AWD van gain more traction, especially with those who have a serious need to maintain services, such as the utility suppliers and, of course, the emergency sector.

"And while snow concentrates minds, you don't need that to justify a vehicle like this when standard vans can just as easily lose traction on wet grass. Many buyers find it is a valid all-year-round purchase."

The MJ Allen group now comprises 13 companies, having been established in Ashford's Victoria Street in 1958 by Tim's father Mike, whose other two sons, Jonathan and Michael Jr, also work for the group.

There are other production sites in Swanley – which makes high precision tooling and machines – and an automotive division in Nottingham, plus sales and warehousing sites in the USA and the Netherlands.

Rail sim's high-speed connection to county

COMPUTER game software developer RailSimulator.com has branched out successfully into Kent.



After assistance from inward investment agency Locate in Kent, the Guildford-based firm took premises at The Joiners Shop – the hub for creative businesses at Chatham Historic Dockyard.

A new product, RailWorks2 Train Simulator, has since gained a top 10 listing in the most downloaded games in the world chart and sold 40,000 copies. The Kent operation has a team of seven working on home and professional simulation software and there are plans to create 15 more jobs in the county.

According to MD Paul Jackson OBE, Kent was the natural choice for its new 'line' due to the high-speed rail network and motorways, skilled graduates and good business facilities.



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When Pearson's met Phillips

ONE of Whitstable's most historic pubs has been refurbished by celebrity chef Richard Phillips.



REVAMP: Pearson's Arms in Whitstable

The 18th century Pearson's Arms, at The Horsebridge, can be credited with helping revive the seaside town in the late 1980s before it went on to become a famous haunt for the down from London set.

It has been lovingly restored by Phillips, a TV regular on The Lorraine Show; Ready, Steady, Cook; and Market Kitchen; and chef/owner at Thackeray's in Tunbridge Wells, The Hengist at Aylesford, and Richard Phillips at Chapel Down, Tenterden.

The interior has been designed in keeping with the history of Whitstable and draws inspiration from its beach location and the town's heritage. Reclaimed wood has been used on the walls to reflect the beach groynes and the lighting is deliberately eclectic – with a story behind each lamp.

The chef has also created a bespoke menu focusing on Kent food and drink, including cheeses, local meat and produce, local and UK brewed beers and wines.

"Our menu celebrates the rich diversity of the county," he said. "We are producing great-tasting, uncomplicated food and a menu which will change with the seasons.

"Our emphasis is on simplicity and honesty, and this is reflected in the interior design. We wanted to bring back a sense of location. We want people to feel comfortable and I believe we have created a space that achieves that."



SPORTING CHANCE: Chris Manley has co-authored a new textbook about teaching sport and PE

Playing the game goes by the book

TWO sports teachers from Kent have achieved their goal and written a textbook to show other teachers how to raise their game.

Chris Manley, a sports and leisure lecturer at North West Kent College, Gravesend, and Cliff Huggett, a lecturer in post-compulsory education at Canterbury Christ Church University, got together when they realised that although there were plenty of books about teaching in general, there was no textbook specific to the study of sports and PE.

Mr Manley, who lives in Burham with his family, taught at Mid Kent College before moving to North West Kent College in 2002, after completing a degree in sports science.

Mr Huggett runs an education degree for sports courses and met Mr Manley through running supported student placements at North West Kent College in Gravesend and Dartford.

With the Olympics being staged in London next year and concerns about obesity and its effects on the health of the population, their new book is timely.

The textbook, titled Teaching Sport and Leisure 14+, has just gone on sale with advance orders coming from as far away as Canada already. Perhaps the Canadians will return the favour and teach us how to cope with three inches of snow…

Creaseys pair are looking to the future

CREASEYS, the Tunbridge Wells-based accountancy firm, has taken on two new trainees – Lizzie Parker and Helen Roberts.

The Lonsdale Gardens-based firm – rated one of the UK's top 100 – hopes the duo can help maintain a reputation as a one of the best places to train in the profession.

Most Creaseys trainees gain high exam marks and several have won key awards in the process.

Creaseys' chief executive Emma Roberts trained and qualified with the firm, as did other partners, including Rob Blundell and Graham Turpin.

Mr Turpin joined in 1993 and qualified in 1997. He said: "Our training programme is designed to develop the accountants and leaders of the future.

"Our growth and strength depends on continuing to bring in good people at the bottom and training them up. We consider everyone who joins us as a potential partner of the firm in future."



NEW FACES: Helen Roberts and Lizzie Parker have joined the Creaseys team

Lizzie, 21, graduated with a degree in psychology from Loughborough University. She said: "I looked at what careers might suit me and saw accountancy as a good fit with psychology, as I am used to dealing with statistics and figures."

Helen, 18, who completed her A-levels this year, said: "Accountancy was a career which appealed to me.

"I looked at other firms but liked Creaseys best, as I can gain wide experience and it's near to my home in Kent, rather than having to commute to London."



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ALL SMILES: Phil Acock, left, of Fourayes with BBC TV presenter Jimmy Doherty

Jimmy's Food Factory boost for Fourayes

HIGHLY-rated Kent fruit grower and food producer Fourayes Farm made a festive TV debut on BBC One's Jimmy's Food Factory this week in the Christmas special.

The programme focused on traditions including mince pies, produced for the show using Fourayes' mincemeat.

Fourayes' MD Phil Acock said: "We were thrilled to be included in the Christmas special of Jimmy's Food Factory.

"Jimmy Doherty and the team spent a day in the factory looking at all the stages of making mincemeat, from initial storage of Bramleys after harvest through to the processing of apples to make mincemeat.

"Many people don't realise Bramleys are one of the main ingredients in mincemeat.

"Some of our mincemeat contains nearly 20 ingredients including nuts, mixed spices and mixed fruit peel.

"Jimmy used our mincemeat to prepare his own mince pies, in his own unique style, which were taste tested on the public."

Mince pies became part of Christmas celebrations in Tudor times when the pies were coffin or cradle shaped, rather than round. They also contained quite a bit of shredded meat in addition to the usual mixture of dried fruit. Mince pies should traditionally have a star on top, to represent the star of Bethlehem.

Jimmy's Food Factory is now in its second series and is presented by Suffolk-based farmer Doherty, who uses a barn to run a makeshift food factory to show how favourite foods are created.

Fourayes is the sole remaining English-owned Bramley apple grower and processor in the UK. The Kent company has been growing Bramleys for more than 50 years, which it processes on site for use in desserts sold by retailers across the country.

Manufacturing a recovery

MANUFACTURERS have welcomed a Government decision to invest £50 million with the sector's leading support body and launch a review into the future of advanced manufacturing.

The Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS), which has helped thousands of small to medium sized firms since its launch in 2002, will get the funding over three years after official recognition as 'a highly valued advice service to industry' by business minister Mark Prisk.

David Caddle, programme manager for MAS South East, said: "We are delighted that the Government has confirmed its continued support and commitment.

"The feedback we receive from the many firms we help each year in the region tells us the work we do has a direct impact on the profitability and efficiency of their business. We can now focus on continuing and evolving that support as part of the UK's investment in its strong manufacturing base."

One firm gaining recently from MAS South East support is Keaflex, manufacturer of precision rubber mouldings. The firm's MD Andy Tuffield said: "It is encouraging to hear MAS support will continue. After the MAS South East strategic planning programme we are now in a strong, stable position to move forward, opening up new business opportunities, delving into new markets and offering new solutions to customers, while maintaining our profile and position within the precision mouldings industry."

News of the renewed funding came as the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) announced the 'Growth Review Framework for Advanced Manufacturing' published last week. The report examines how to remove barriers preventing the UK becoming Europe's leading exporter of high value goods and those stopping people from seeking a career in engineering.

Mr Prisk said: "A strong manufacturing base is essential for a balanced economy, where exports and investment drive growth, not debt and unsustainable spending.

"The review will see the Government align with industry in our shared ambition to put manufacturing industries on a more solid footing."

The Government also announced plans for an Advanced Manufacturing Summit in January, to be attended by manufacturers and key ministers including Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg.

Mr Prisk said: "The summit will be an opportunity to agree actions that Government, industry and education can take over the next 10 years to meet our ambitions."

Small glimmer of hope

A SURVEY by the Thames Gateway Chamber of Commerce in Kent showed 62 per cent of members thought cuts in the Government's autumn spending review would hurt business.

But an event at Kent Science Park in Sittingbourne next month and featuring experts from Partnership Working is being billed as a chance to show how small to medium enterprises will see a substantial increase in the amount of outsourced Government work available in 2011.

Debasish Sen of Partnership Working is also the Federation of Small Business's spokesman on procurement. He said: "Government departments are expected to increase the money they spend with SMEs.

"Business minister Mark Prisk has said he will work to remove barriers that prevent small businesses accessing Government contracts. SMEs need to be able to respond to these opportunities in a credible way. They need to understand how public procurement works. They also need to present a united front with aggregated resources to compete for contracts."

The session at Kent Science Park will offer advice on how SMEs can improve their success rates as well as guidance on collaborating with other companies to improve their chances.

Park director James Speck said: "Many small business owners had a nervous wait to see what the impact of the review would be. That we are actually going to see an increase in the amount of work outsourced to SMEs from the public sector is both unexpected and welcome."

The event runs from 2-4pm on Tuesday, January 20. Email bookings@partnership-working.co.uk to reserve your place.

ELAINE Lawford, a civil engineer from Loose in Maidstone, has been appointed chair of the Kent and East Sussex branch of the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE).

The body represents more than 2,500 professional civil engineers. ICE also engages with schools across the region to promote civil engineering as a career, and works with local and regional government on issues such as low carbon energy infrastructure, transport, flood risk and waste management.

Elaine, pictured right, said: "I'm delighted to have been appointed to this senior position within ICE and look forward to stepping up our engagement with schools and the public over the next 12 months."





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Picture: ADY KERRY



Barcham itching for Gills return

INJURED: Andy Barcham tore ankle ligaments

WITH the tedious rehabilitation work on a serious ankle injury now complete, Andy Barcham is desperate to play a key role for Gillingham in the second half of the season.

The 24-year-old has spent almost four months on the sidelines, the longest of his career, recovering after tearing ankle ligaments at Southend United in August.

Barcham was a frustrated spectator as the Gills struggled through the autumn, but along with fellow key players Curtis Weston, Simon King and Garry Richards, he is closing in on a first-team return over the festive period.

The winger is delighted to have left the treatment room behind and wants to prove to manager Andy Hessenthaler he can be a key player in the latter stages of the campaign.

"When a new manager comes in you want to impress and make the jersey your own," he said. "That's not been the case for me so I'm eager to get back and show him what I can do.

"What's always kept me going is there's a long way still to go in the season. Christmas is very important and the back end of the season where the games feel like they count even more."

With Dover Athletic facing Huddersfield in the FA Cup next month, sports reporter **TOM HOWARD** looks back at the last time a Kent non-league side reached the third round

Third round memories

THE YEAR was 1996. England hosted football's European Championships but while most will recollect the nation's semi-final heartbreak, for one corner of the county the year will always be remembered for an FA Cup tie against Aston Villa.

Few would have predicted non-league Gravesend & Northfleet, playing in front of crowds of 500 in the then Beazer Homes Premier League, would earn the right to play Premier League giants Aston Villa in a lucrative FA Cup third round tie. But Gravesend's 3-0 defeat against Villa on January 6 went down in folklore amongst Kent football fans and whenever the third round occurs, the memories come flooding back.



Manager Chris Weller's side played nine games before reaching the third round in what is one of their most remarkable runs in the competition.

The manager, who was working in a prison at the time, still remembers the build-up to the tie, which was switched from Stonebridge Road to Villa Park following an agreement between both clubs.

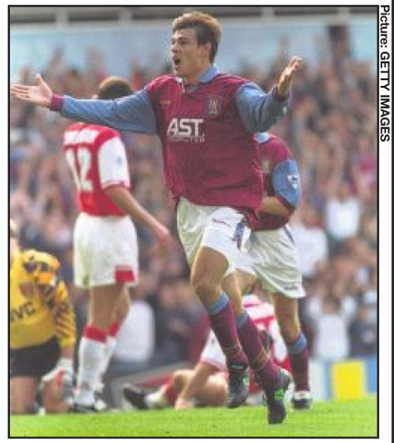
Weller said: "It was a big game and the media were ringing me, we had the television cameras down and all that.

"[Aston Villa manager] Brian Little phoned me while I was at work prior to the tie just to talk about the game because there had been a lot of interest. He wished me the best of luck and said well done for getting this far. It was very nice for him to ring and it was totally unexpected."

Fleet striker Mark Munday played the entire 90 minutes of the game at Villa Park and he regards the experience as one of his greatest in football. Despite the game being 14 years ago, the former Whitstable manager remains adamant his side should have found the net in front of 26,000 spectators, 5,000 from Kent, on the day.

He said: "We started very well and within a minute we popped it forward and Micky Cotter had cut inside Gareth Southgate in the box and he took him down and it was a stonewall penalty. I took penalties then and there was a lot going through my mind. It wasn't given and they went down the other end and scored to make it 1-0. It was a frenetic pace and one of those where you had to be on top of your game both physically and mentally just to compete.

Picture: GETTY IMAGES



HEARTBREAKER: Savo Milosevic scored one of Villa's three goals that sunk the Fleet and (left) the matchday programme

"We had chances but Mark Bosnich was quite comfortable to be fair. We tested them but Savo Milosevic scored a cracking volley for the second just after the break and Tommy Johnson got one later to make it three.

"We got a standing ovation from all fans in the ground at the end of the game and Villa chairman Doug Ellis came into our dressing room at the end and sang our praises. He said there were a few Premier League sides they had dominated more than us."

Picture: ADY KERRY



WINTER WONDERLAND: Snow left the fairways and bunkers at Royal St George's unplayable

Weather puts paid to Kent's sport schedule

THE FAMOUS sand dunes at Royal St George's were more suitable for skiing than golf last weekend as snow decimated the pre-Christmas sporting schedule.

Sandwich Bay was not the only place suffering from Arctic-like conditions, as snow and freezing temperatures left the county's teams kicking their heels for the second time in three weekends.

No football or rugby was possible, despite huge efforts from volunteers around Kent. Gillingham fans assembled at Priestfield from 8am on Saturday in a bid to allow their game with Chesterfield to go ahead.

It was ultimately in vain, as the plunging temperatures were too much for the club's covers. It was the second successive Gills home game called off, meaning Tuesday's visit of Port Vale will be their first outing at Priestfield for more than six weeks.

The conditions even affected Sunday's ice hockey, accounting for Invicta Dynamos' game against Romford Raiders in Gillingham.

Airport closures also played a role, with roller hockey side Herne Bay United Kings unable to fly to Spain for their CERS Cup second leg tie against Lloret de Mar. The European governing body ruled there would be no rearrangement, so the first leg score, a 6-2 win to the Spanish club, would stand for both games.

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Giving youth a chance

After three youngsters graduated from the Kent Academy this year and signed new professional contracts, sports editor **GLENN PEARSON** went behind the scenes at St Lawrence to meet the coaching staff charged with identifying talent in the county

SEVEN years since its inception as part of an ECB scheme to develop young cricketers, the Kent Academy system continues to be a vital part of the county's make-up.

With the majority of clubs struggling to make ends meet, the demand for 'home grown' cricketers has become ever more crucial with finances and new player regulations no longer allowing the influx of overseas and Kolpaks that were once the norm five years ago.

Inevitably the attention has now turned to bringing through young players which means more emphasis on second-team cricket and the hugely successful Academy. While Kent were one of the last counties to adopt the Academy set-up, having switched from the traditional age-group system, it has progressed at a rapid pace with a number of graduates having made the leap into the first-class game.

Two of the first intake of players, Joe Denly and Lydia Greenway, have since gone on to be regulars in their respective first-teams as well as play international cricket with England, while more recently the likes of Sam Northeast, Alex Blake and Matt Coles have forced their way into the Kent side.

A further three young players have been given professional contracts this winter; wicketkeeper Sam Billings, left-hand batsman Chris Piesley and off-spinner Adam Riley, who all impressed in a youthful second-team this year.

There are others pushing their case, including the England under-19 pair of Daniel Bell-Drummond and Adam Ball, which is evidence the system is now really beginning to bear fruit.

Interestingly, three senior members of the club's coaching staff have all had a part to play in developing the Academy since it began in September 2003.



Pictures: ADY KERRY

OPPORTUNITY: (l-r) Simon Willis says Kent's Academy players have a great chance to prove themselves and follow in the footsteps of the likes of Joe Denly and Sam Northeast

Head coach Paul Farbrace, high performance director Simon Willis and current director Phil Relf have all at some stage in their coaching career headed up the Kent Academy.

Willis, the former Kent wicketkeeper, was put in charge of the county's first-ever Academy, while Farbrace took over the reigns a year later before becoming assistant coach of Sri Lanka in 2008.

Willis, who last season was charged with nurturing a particularly youthful second-team, as well as identifying young players around the county, said the club are now in a position to give youth a chance and it's up to them to take it.

"I think Academies do work but I think they need to be taken seriously and not just seen as an add on," he said. "If you take your Academy and youth structure seriously and have the right resources to give your players every opportunity, then there are lots of examples of players going through.

"There has been a period when I was with the first-team and we were setting up a squad; and probably there wasn't going to be as many opportunities for young players. "Then regulations changed with Kolpak issues and that has now allowed more opportunities for youngsters, whether that's right or wrong, only time will time.

"Now is a fantastic opportunity for young players to take their chance. We have a young second-team going forwards and we have a good group of young players now; you're not expecting them all to make the grade, but as and when opportunities arise, things are in place for them to make the step up."

Relf, who has 11 young players on his Academy programme, says the club are now able to tailor their system to meet the demands of the first-team.

He said: "There's no secret that the bowling department is a bit pushed at the moment, so we have targeted three or four young seamers to work closely with and the aim being to put a bit of pressure on those first-team lads.

"The Academy is about preparing them for first-class cricket without making all the decisions for them, and it's really progressed where we are able to have more one-to-one sessions which really benefits the young players."



Picture: ADY KERRY

CALL-UP: (l-r) Darren Stevens and James Tredwell are in England's 30-man squad

County pair in England's squad for World Cup

KENT all-rounder Darren Stevens and off-spinner James Tredwell have both been named in England's 30-man preliminary squad for the ICC World Cup in February.

The Kent duo have been selected for the tournament which is to be held in Bangaldesh, India and Sri Lanka, although the squad will be trimmed to 15 next month.

Tredwell has played one Test and a One-Day International, while Stevens, if selected, would be playing his first game for England.

County head coach, Paul Farbrace, said: "I am thrilled for both of them to be included in the preliminary squad.

"It is thoroughly deserved and reflects well on the one-day cricket the team has played. It would be brilliant for them and the club to both be included in the final 15."

England have been drawn in a group alongside Bangladesh, India, Ireland, Netherlands, South Africa and West Indies.

The one-day team will play two warm-up games against Canada and Pakistan before their World Cup campaign begins on February 22 against Netherlands in Nagpur, India.



Picture: ADY KERRY

Duo fail in bid for a full tour card

Q-SCHOOL: Dani Masters failed to earn a full Ladies European Tour card next year

DISAPPOINTMENT was the overriding emotion as both Kent golfers competing at the Ladies European Tour's (LET) final qualifying tournament missed out on the main prize.

The top 30, after five tough rounds at the La Manga Club in Spain, received cards to next year's LET tournaments.

Dani Masters, from Maidstone, began well, but a 10-over-par third round of 81 looked costly. A gutsy two-under-par fourth round saw the 27-year-old narrowly make the cut, thanks to a birdie at the 18th, but a two-over-par final round saw her finish 53rd.

The finish means Masters will still be able to play on the LET next season, but only in a limited number of events.

Gravesend's Claire Aitken was looking for her third successive top-30 finish in final qualifying, but fell well short. The 24-year-old missed the cut by three shots, finishing tied for 64th which, like Masters, will mean only limited outings on the LET in 2011.

Sarries commend Kent's ability to turn out talent

PREMIERSHIP giants Saracens have heaped praise on the Kent rugby development programme which has already unearthed a crop of future internationals via their academy system.

With Ben Ransom and James Short having already progressed from their Kent roots to play first-team rugby with the Sarries, county bosses are continuing to work alongside the London club to ensure more players follow in their footsteps.

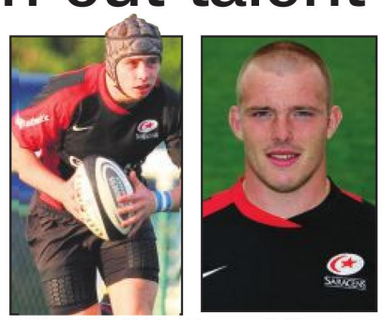
Youngsters selected for the Kent school of rugby at 13 are monitored by Saracens, with the cream of the crop receiving extra coaching and eventually progressing into the junior sides en route to top-level senior rugby.

Kent are one of three counties, alongside Essex and Hertfordshire, to work with the Premiership club, but Saracens senior manager Mike Hynard, who ran the academy for four years, was quick to flag up their outstanding qualities.

He said: "We are very fortunate with Kent because despite the geographical and logistical problems for players to come and train at Saracens, Kent have a very good in-house structure.

"Each county has a bit of licence to run it however they want, but Kent put the most effort in, they're better planned, better organised and they have better development."

Ransom, a former Tonbridge schoolboy, is now part of the England under-20 squad, while Harry Allen has international under-16 caps to his name, having played for Chislehurst & Sidcup Grammar School and Blackheath before his Sarries switch.



RISING STARS: Ben Ransom (left) and Harry Allen of Saracens and England

Another player catching the eye at Vicarage Road is former Tunbridge Wells scrum-half Luke Baldwin, who has just returned to Saracens after a loan spell with Championship side Bedford Blues.

However, Hynard's key tip is an even younger Kent product, with outside-centre Nick Thompkins creating a real storm since being spotted in action for the county's under-13 side.

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CHRISTMAS CRACKERED

Gills assistant boss Hendon's fears as players face four games over nine days

By **DAVID PRITCHARD**

THE BUSY festive period begins for Gillingham this weekend with assistant manager Ian Hendon voicing reservations about the "ridiculous" schedule.

A trip to Aldershot Town on Boxing Day marks the start of a run which sees the Gills play four games – almost a 10th of the campaign – in nine days.

The timing of the bank holidays means it is the tightest cluster of games the club have faced at Christmas for six years and this season's preparations have been complicated by the snow and ice which prevented outdoor training this week.

Hendon, who admitted he loved this time of year as a player, believes it will be a tough task for everyone in the division.

"I've got to say I think it's ridiculous the amount of games we've got in such a short space of time," he said.

"The games come so thick and fast it's the worst I remember and I've been in the game 20 years. It's crazy, especially with the preparation we have for each game, we'll have one day to recover and then go again."

The upside of having 12 points to play for in a matter of days is that the teams which manage their resources best can make major progress. With games against Port Vale, Stevenage and Wycombe Wanderers to follow, the Gills could even find themselves in the play-off places come the first week of January – if they can continue their good form.

Hendon said: "It's a great opportunity to string some results together and get up the table. As much as it's a crazy time, we are looking forward to it. Players are coming back from injury now and we have a squad that's capable – it's just a matter of carrying on."

Last week's postponement at home to Chesterfield meant the Gills have played just once in 33 days before heading to Aldershot. Despite this they showed few signs of rustiness in their last outing, a 4-2 win at Macclesfield Town, which was the club's third successive win.

The Shots are tricky opponents on their own patch but have won just twice in their last 10 games, a run which includes a 2-0 FA Cup defeat at Dover Athletic.

Curtis Weston, Simon King, Garry Richards and Andy Barcham are all likely to play some part over the Christmas period for Gillingham, and at least one of the quartet could be involved on Sunday.

One player almost definitely ruled out is Jack Payne, who was on the verge of a return from a foot injury but suffered a set-back when he rolled his ankle in training on Monday.



SET-BACK: Jack Payne has twisted his ankle in training



HECTIC: Ian Hendon has slammed Gills' festive fixture list as 'ridiculous'
Pictures: ADY KERRY

There is also a hectic schedule in Conference South, with four Kent derbies in three days.

On Boxing Day second-placed Bromley host fellow title contenders Dover Athletic at Hayes Lane, while Dartford, who are in need of points to move away from the relegation zone, take on high-flying Welling United. Ebbsfleet United, also in the promotion mix, travel to struggling Lewes.

A bumper crowd is expected at Stonebridge Road on Tuesday when old rivals Ebbsfleet United and Dartford meet. Bragging rights will also be at stake when Welling host Bromley and elsewhere Dover welcome Lewes to Crabble.



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Plans for cycle park on the right track

CONSTRUCTION on a world-class cycling facility in Kent will begin next month after the building contract was awarded this week.

The work is to be carried out by VolkerFitzpatrick, who have offices in Sevenoaks, after they beat four other competitors to win the contract. It is expected to take 10 months to complete, which will start in January.

Planning permission for Cyclopark, situated next to the A2 between Dartford and Gravesend, was approved in August 2009. Since then the priority has been on raising the investment for the £9.7 million project, which when completed will provide facilities for road cycling and time trialling, mountain bike trails and a BMX track.

Kent County Council has secured more than £7m in funding, while investment has also been pledged from Sport England, the Colyer-Fergusson Trust, British Cycling and the Homes and Communities Agency.

While the funds raised already will make Cyclopark viable, further investment is required to add facilities in the long term.

Ian Drake, chief executive at British Cycling, is impressed with the scale of the project, which will be built on a 43-hectare site.





PROGRESS: The Cyclopark will include an academy developed by Kent Olympic hero Jamie Staff with the aim of producing the young riders of the future within the county

He said: "The plans for the Cyclopark venue look fantastic. It is a perfect example of the continued efforts we are making, together with Sport England, to create excellent modern cycling facilities across the UK.

"The new velopark here will offer people of all ages and abilities an opportunity to enjoy cycling in a safe, controlled and traffic free environment, supporting the growth of our sport at the grassroots and helping us develop future cycling stars."

Cyclopark is expected to include an academy developed by Ashford-born Jamie Staff MBE, an Olympic and world BMX champion, to help develop young talent.

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